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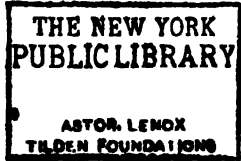
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THE REV. JOHN BROWN,
*late Minister of the Gospel
at Haddington.*

*Professor of Divinity under the Associate Synod & Author
of the 1st Interpreting Bible.*

THE
CHRISTIAN JOURNAL;

OR,

**COMMON INCIDENTS
SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTORS;**

BEING A

Series of Meditations

ON A

SPRING, SUMMER, HARVEST, WINTER, AND SABBATH-DAY.

BY **JOHN BROWN,**

LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT HADDINGTON.

A NEW EDITION.

And now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee; or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.
Job vii. 9.

The ear that is always attentive to God, never hears a voice that speaks not of him, the soul, whose eye is intent on him, never sees an atom wherein she doth not discern her best beloved.
Cather.

Let us begin with God; all things are full of God.

Hesiod.

Some angel guide my pencil, while I draw
What nothing less than angel can exceed;
A man on earth devoted to the skies;
He sees with other eyes than ours; where we
Discern a sun, he spies a Deity:
What makes another smile makes him adore.

Young.

London:

PRINTED BY J. HADDON, TABERNACLE WALK,

AND SOLD BY R. & S. TIBBUTT, BOOKSELLERS,
HIGH STREET, LEICESTER.

1813.



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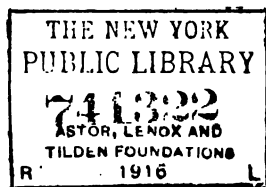
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NOV 23 1916

THE

PREFACE.

TO be spiritually minded,—to be habitually disposed, with pleasure and attention, to think of, and desire after spiritual objects, is life and peace. It implies an interest in the life-giving covenant of peace, which cannot be broken ; a purification of conscience with Jesus' quickening blood ; and an inward possession of his quickening and peaceful Spirit. It promotes habitual serenity and meekness : it rendereth us active and lively in the service of God. By it we live as angels on earth, and are fitted to join them in heaven : by it we improve the whole universe as the temple of a present Godhead. In our deepest plunges of trouble and want, we converse, we walk with the "high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, and dwells in the high and holy place." Every visible object commenceth preacher, concerning things which do not appear : in every creature we discern a Maker, a Saviour's perfections ; we hear his voice, that our soul may live.—Detesting the romantic, the too fashionable amusement of folly, of lewdness, and blasphemy, we recreate ourselves with contemplations, which neither defile for the present, nor sting for the future ; and "have our conversation in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour."

To promote this happy attainment, this delightful temper of mind, is the sacred page crowded with emblems ; to promote this is the design of the following attempt.—Let not the natural incidents be accounted too mean for the superstructure. Are not all things mean? nay, equally mean, if compared with the Most HIGH? but if he made them, if he preserve and manage them for his own glory ; is it below us, the offspring of dust, to improve them to his honour, and our eternal advantage? Doth not the divine Spirit, in his invaluable oracles, constitute the puny ant, the lazy cur, the wallowing sow, the troubled sea, with its mire and dirt, our spiritual instructors? Doth not Jesus, the wisdom of God, draw his instructive, his inestimable parables, from sparrows, fishes, nets, bottles, grains of mustard-seed, dough, and other common objects? Why may not we, though at infinite distance, follow his blessed example ; and, with the skilful chemist, extract a precious spirit from things outwardly base and contemptible?

To exhibit in every journal, not the exercise of a single day, but a particular form of the Christian life ; and to adapt the style to the traveller's varying frame, hath been attempted. To have quoted every, even sacred authority, would have crowded the margin : a thousand inspired phrases are therefore solely marked with inverted commas : a thousand more left to the mere observal of the attentive reader, well instructed in the oracles of Christ.

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L I F E
OF THE
REVEREND JOHN BROWN,
OF HADDINGTON.

THE Reverend John Brown, like many other men of eminence, owed little to descent. He was born A. D. 1722, in a small village named Carpow, in the parish of Abernethy, county of Perth, North Britain, of parents in obscure circumstances, and remarkable for nothing but their good sense and piety. At an early period he was deprived of their care, and cast on the world, with no other dependence but the providence of that God who is "the Father of the fatherless, and the orphan's stay." Having no more a father's house, he engaged himself in the service of a neighbouring farmer, and was for some time employed in tending the "ewes with young." He dates his first impressions of religion in his eighth year; and he frequently afterwards recollected with pleasure the "kindness of youth." About this period, he repeatedly said, a few years before his death, he experienced more clear and delightful discoveries of divine truth, than ever afterwards he had enjoyed, or ever on earth expected to enjoy. Even then appeared that ardent thirst for knowledge, and that indefatigable industry, which, with the

blessing of God, laid the basis of his future usefulness and eminence. He employed his leisure hours in studying the Latin, Hebrew, and Greek languages: and in circumstances far from favorable, he made greater progress than many who have had every possible advantage. He exhibits, for the encouragement of the future student in a similar situation, a proof what ability and perseverance unaided are capable of performing. His astonishing progress excited the attention of the neighbourhood, and brought him early into notice. But his acquisitions were not without their alloy. They created him envy; and envy created him enemies. These, unable to equal him, and piqued at his superiority, had recourse to a calumny the most vile and absurd that malignity ever uttered. That his attainments were extraordinary, they admitted. They went farther. They pronounced them supernatural, and charitably imputed them to diabolical agency. At that time there were men weak or wicked enough to believe it: at present it is forgotten, or remembered only by the acquaintance of his early years. It is too ridiculous to deserve serious mention; but it serves to show how very extraordinary his early acquirements were esteemed. The calumny itself is rather obsolete than new. It was once reported of one infinitely greater and better, "He casteth out devils," said the Pharisees of Jesus Christ, "by Beelzebub, the prince

of devils." "If they called him Beelzebub, how much more they of his household?"

In the year 1732 happened one of the most important events in the ecclesiastical history of Scotland for the preceding century: the secession of Messrs. Ebenezer Erskine, James Fisher, William Moncrieff, and William Wilson, from the established church, and their erection of a distinct society. Mr. Brown, from principles of duty, early attached himself to the Secession church, of which he continued a respectable and zealous member until the time of his death.

In 1745, Charles Edward Stuart made an imprudent and unsuccessful attempt to recover the British throne. On this occasion, the loyalty of Seceders appeared pre-eminent. Not a single individual of them joined the rebels, and many of them took arms in defence of the house of Hanover, and the Protestant religion. The subject of these memoirs served as a volunteer, and lay for a short time in the Castle of Edinburgh.

As he had from the beginning resolved to devote himself to his Saviour in the work of the ministry, with a view to obtain more time for preparatory study, he, in 1748, commenced teacher. In this station, to which respectability is seldom attached proportioned to its importance, he spent two years, discharging its duties with equal attention and success. His character as

a teacher, attracted scholars from different parts of the country. The pains he took in instructing his pupils in the different branches of education, and in the principles of religion, are still remembered with gratitude by those of them who survive. No fewer than eight or nine ministers of the gospel received at his school the rudiments of education.

During this period, besides making further progress in divinity and literature, he committed part of the scriptures to memory; and so great was his assiduity, that he is stated to have committed fifteen chapters of Genesis in an evening after the hours of school. His application was indeed extreme, and too often encroached on the necessary hours of rest. We have been assured, he was frequently not above four hours in bed during the night. These things, certainly, show the uncommon ardour of his mind in pursuit of knowledge; but they do not perhaps challenge unqualified approbation. Few could support such exertions. In the issue they seldom fail to injure the constitution, however vigorous, and even abridge the probable period of life. Mr. Brown's intense application, not only in all probability was the cause of those complaints with which he was afflicted to the close of life, but deprived the world of his labours at an earlier period than might have been presumed from the natural strength of his constitution. Mr.

Brown was sensible of his error before his death, and regretted to a friend that he had not paid sufficient attention to his health. Let the studious take warning.

When the unhappy division took place in the Associate Synod, on account of a difference of opinion respecting a clause in some burgess oaths, Mr. Brown sided with the advocates of forbearance. His conduct, on this occasion, deserves the rather to be mentioned, because he was not perfectly satisfied of the lawfulness of the oaths which were the matter of dispute; but he considered it as a proper subject for the exercise of that mutual charity and forbearance, which the Scriptures so frequently inculcate, and he highly condemned the subsequent proceedings of the opposite party. This single fact shows, that though firm in his adherence to what he judged to be truth, and strenuous in its defence, he was at the same time the friend of forbearance, both in principle and practice.

After studying divinity under the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine, and the Rev. James Fisher, he was licensed to preach by the Associate Congregation of Haddington, the county-town of East Lothian, and another from the Congregation of Stow, Mid-Lothian. The Presbytery left it to his own decision, and he gave the preference to the congregation of Haddington, partly on account of some previous disappointments it had received, and partly (from a

diffidence of his own abilities) because it was the smallest of the two. And here we cannot help remarking the wisdom of Providence, in frequently placing men of superior abilities in small charges. Had Mr. Boston or Mr. Brown been placed in stations more public and eminent, it is highly probable that they would have been less diffusively useful than they actually have been. "The foolishness of God is wiser than men." After his ordination at Haddington, he still considered himself as holding a kind of pastoral relation to the congregation of Stow; and, until they got a pastor of their own, he annually examined them, and preached to them a number of Sabbaths.

He now pursued his studies with increasing vigour. As his congregation, though respectable for the character of its members, was not numerous, it allowed him to follow the natural bent of his mind. He was never more in his element than when in his study, and here he spent the greater part of his time. He was an early riser. In summer, he rose between four and five o'clock in the morning; and in the winter, at six. This practice he used to recommend to others, and especially to young ministers and students. From the time he rose, he usually continued, except during the intervals of meals and family devotion, in close study till eight o'clock in the evening.

His acquisitions kept pace with his industry. His knowledge was general; and though, from duty and inclination, his attention was more particularly devoted to divinity, he endeavoured to trace the whole circle of science. His attainments in literature will, no doubt, appear extraordinary when it is remembered, that, except during one month when learning Latin, he never enjoyed the assistance of a teacher. He was, notwithstanding, a good Latin scholar. Of the Greek, but especially of the Hebrew, he possessed a critical knowledge. He understood the Arabic, Persic, Syriac, Ethiopic, French, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, and German. He studied with attention philosophy, natural and moral; natural history, and civil law. But his favourite reading was history and divinity—his knowledge of both of which is sufficiently apparent from his writings. It may not be improper here to mention a practice he sometimes adopted. He read with the pen in his hand, and drew up abridgements of the books he perused. In this manner, he abridged the whole of the Ancient Universal History, Blackstone's Commentaries, and a number of other works. This practice, though tedious, must certainly give a person a great advantage over the cursory reader in point of accuracy of information. In divinity, he perused chiefly the writings of the best old divines, particularly those of Turretine, Pictet, Mastricht, and

Owen. Of later writers, his favourite authors were Messrs. Boston, Erskine, and Hervey. But above all, he studied the scriptures of truth. His acquaintance with the sacred oracles was singular. Seldom was a text quoted but he could accurately repeat it, explain its meaning, and state its connection.

But, "though I speak with the tongue of men and angels, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and have not charity, I am nothing." Superior talents and knowledge, unaccompanied with piety, are comparatively of little value, and too often prove injurious to the possessor and society. In Mr. Brown, knowledge was the handmaid of religion. He was not less distinguished for his piety as a Christian, and his conscientious discharge of his duties as a minister, than his learning as a scholar, and his knowledge as a divine. Prayer was his delight. Besides the stated duties of the closet and family, he appeared often engaged in pious ejaculation. He frequently set apart a morning for extraordinary devotion; and when he judged circumstances required it, he used to observe days of fasting and thanksgiving in his family. From a firm faith of the divine promise, he seemed to have acquired an habitual serenity of mind, and was never much transported with joy, nor depressed with grief. In him the promise was evidently fulfilled, "Thou wilt keep him in

perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." One day, on hearing a most tremendous peal of thunder, he said to a friend with a placid smile, "That is the low whisper of my God." No person was more sympathizing with the afflicted, or more ready to do them every service in his power: yet he was scarcely ever seen to weep, but from the deep impression of divine truth, and compassion to perishing souls. Bodily pain, and the death of relations, he endured without shedding a tear; but, when warning sinners of their danger, and beseeching them to be reconciled unto God, the emotions of his heart frequently overcame his firmness and checked his utterance.

In conversation, his constant aim was instruction and edification. His heart was chiefly occupied with divine things, and "out of the abundance of his heart, his mouth spake." He was, however, remarkably delicate in speaking of his own religious experience: till within a short time of his death, he scarcely ever mentioned it. In political disputes, he seldom gave any opinion. The only use he made of these subjects when introduced, was to lead the attention to things of infinitely greater moment. He thus expresses his sentiments respecting them, in an essay published at the time Mr. Pitt came into office. "Upon our sovereign's advancing his young minister; while multitudes strive who shall condemn or defend the British premier,

let me turn my eyes to Jesus Christ, to whom the Majesty of Heaven hath committed all judgment and power in heaven and earth. Unless as an introduction to a better subject, it is not worth my while to speak or think of British ministers of state. Hoary hairs tell me, I shall soon be beyond their good or evil." Much study, combined with a temper naturally serious, gave a gravity to his manners, which those who were little acquainted with him mistook for severity. But, though grave, he was not gloomy. Among his friends, he was cheerful and agreeable. His conversation abounded with religious anecdote, and was at times enlivened with innocent pleasantry. But, in general, it was more distinguished for its solidity than its brilliancy ; its seriousness, than its humour.

He was a conscientious observer of the Sabbath. His sentiments on this subject were of the stricter kind : he regarded it as a day sacred to the duties of religion. To spend any part of it in recreation, or in conversation upon common occurrences, or even the external affairs of the church, he considered as inconsistent with its spiritual nature, and offensive to God. And as he exemplified its strict observance in his own conduct, so he frequently inculcated it in his family, and from the pulpit. Few things are a better criterion, both of the reality and degree of piety.

He was, also, an example of the believer in charity. It was his opinion, that

LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

every man is bound to devote at least the tenth part of his income to pious uses; and, although his family were numerous and his income small, he often exceeded that proportion. To furnish himself with the means of beneficence to others, he exercised an economy in his expences on his own person, which those who were ignorant of the motive thought extreme. His alms were frequently accompanied with instruction and advice, that, while the body was supplied, the soul might be saved. To poor congregations, who requested a collection from his people, rather than burden them, he several times sent considerable sums out of his own pocket. An enemy to all ostentation, he distributed his charity so secretly, that his left hand scarcely knew what his right gave. "And from experience," says he, in a short narrative he drew up of his life, at the request of his friends, "I can testify, that liberality to the Lord is one of the most effectual means of making one rich. My wealth, instead of being diminished, is thereby much increased. There is that giveth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty."

Mr. Brown was also distinguished by a spirit of forgiveness. Notwithstanding the abuse he received from some ministers in early life, he never showed the smallest sign of resentment, or was ever heard to speak to their disadvantage. To certain

writers who reviled him from the press, he meekly replied, "Whatever they wish me, my heart's desire is, that they may obtain redemption, through the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of sins : whatever they call me, may Jehovah call them, the redeemed of the Lord, sought out and not forsaken." A clergyman of a different denomination, who had treated him with much incivility, being reduced to poverty, he sent him money in a manner that concealed the benefactor ; and, after the clergyman's death, offered to take one of his sons, and educate him in his own family.

Another amiable trait of his character, was attachment to old friends. He retained the highest sense of the favours he received in early life. Over the families of his benefactors, he afterwards showed a parental care ; and, though elevated in station above the companions of his youth, he always treated them with attention and affection.

Of his modesty and humility, the reader can have no better proof, than the manner in which he has expressed himself in these memoirs, to which we have already referred.—"The mercies," says he, "which I have received, and the sins I have committed, are innumerable. God has been doing (I had almost said) all that he can, to save, comfort, and favour me ; and I have been acting to my utmost, in opposing and dishonouring him. And now, after all that he has performed, and all that

I have professed, I am good for nothing, neither to teach nor to learn, neither to live nor to die ; but am, both in heart and life, evil, only evil, superabundantly evil, unto this day." How very different is this language from that of some late infidel writers, who have condescended to be their own biographers, and who cannot conceal in a single sentence their admiration of themselves ! We are at a loss whether most to admire the amiable humility of the Christian, or wonder at the silly vanity of the philosopher.

For some years before his death, he took a peculiar pleasure in perusing and abridging the lives of eminent Christians.

During his last illness, he expressed a grateful sense of the smallest kindness ; and so satisfied was he with the dispensations of Providence, that he never uttered a single complaint.

It is, however, chiefly in his official character that we must regard Mr. Brown ; and here he appeared to peculiar advantage. He was a workman that needed not to be ashamed ; a faithful steward of the divine mysteries. Besides an expository lecture, he delivered three discourses every Sabbath, excepting a short time in winter. He occasionally also preached in the adjacent villages. His discourses were not general declamations, or dry discussions ; they were addressed to the conscience and heart of the hearer. His object, in all his ministrations, was to exalt, not himself,

but his Master. Great as his learning was, he never made a show of it in the pulpit. The only use he there made of it was to reduce, as far as possible, the doctrines of the gospel to the level of common capacities. He often repeated with approbation a saying of Archbishop Usher, "It will take all our learning to make things plain." His language was simple and unadorned, but impressive and energetic. His manner was very different from what would receive the name of fine speaking; but such was the solemnity and importance of what he said, and the earnestness of his delivery, that it was scarcely possible to hear him without being affected. He spake, like his Lord, with authority and a hallowed pathos, which shewed he had tasted the sweetness, and felt the power of what he delivered. He knew the "terrors of the Lord;" but it was by the "mercies of God" he chiefly endeavoured to persuade men. His greatest pleasure was to publish the glad tidings of salvation, and the free access of sinners to a Saviour. With all the earnestness of affection, and the tear of pity in his eye, he exhorted, urged, and intreated them "to be reconciled unto God." He was never averse to preach, if sinners were willing to hear. Far from esteeming it a burden, he accounted it "a grace given unto him, to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." It was his usual practice before and after public worship, to retire into his closet, and pour out his heart

in prayer to "Him who seeth in secret." Of trifling conversation at any time, but especially after being engaged in the services of religion, he testified the most marked disapprobation.

In addition to his stated duties in the pulpit, assisting his brethren at the dispensation of the Lord's supper, and occasionally preaching in vacant congregations, he annually visited ministerially all the members of his congregation. His addresses on these occasions were solemn and appropriate. He also catechised them twice in the year. When any of them were in affliction, he visited them, if possible, immediately on receiving information. And he was ever ready to perform this "labour of love" to those of different denominations, when he understood he should be welcome. In his visits to the sick, he was never tedious. His calls were frequent, but not long. In general, indeed, he studied and recommended brevity in religious exercises. His public prayers, in particular, were short, except on days of thanksgiving and fasting; and, at these times, he usually prayed with so much fervour, as tended at once to excite, elevate, and preserve the devout affections of his fellow-worshippers.

No man more ardently wished the success and diffusion of evangelical truth. He cheerfully undertook many long journies, that he might enjoy an opportunity of preaching to sinners pardon through the blood of Jesus. From a conviction that it was his

duty, he joined the Secession, and continued its steady friend as long as he lived ; but he discovered a sincere and ardent affection to all the followers of Christ. In what is called church-communion, he was strict ; but as to the communion of saints, as opposed to it, he was truly liberal and catholic. He greatly rejoiced at the success of the pious Brainerd, and frequently in his discourses, when the subject permitted, descanted with much pleasure on missions to the Heathen.

Societies for prayer and religious conversation, Mr. Brown not only recommended from the pulpit and the press, but endeavoured to encourage by attending them himself. Those in the town, he visited, if possible, once a week ; and those in the country, as often as he had opportunity. For some years, a society of children met in his house ; and, though it was commonly on Saturday evening, he frequently left his studies for half an hour, went into their meeting, conversed familiarly with them on divine things, and, after giving them some good advice, he recommended them to God by prayer. He knew the importance, and had experienced the pleasures of early piety, and he took every opportunity to recommend and inculcate it. Sometimes he preached a sermon, or course of sermons, to the young ; and in the application of his other discourses, he not unfrequently introduced an exhortation to them. He often catechised them in the schools, or in his meeting house, and he seldom met with young

persons, without introducing some observations respecting their misery by nature, and the method of salvation through Jesus Christ. Several of these hints seem to have had a good effect.

He met with few trials from the irregular behaviour of the members of his congregation; but when any of them were guilty of open and heinous transgressions, it grieved his spirit, and often deprived him of sleep. When he understood that differences existed among them, he made it his business to have them removed. He was peculiarly solicitous to effect this, in view of the dispensation of the Lord's Supper.

As he was a faithful, so he was a successful minister of the New Testament. In his own congregation, a number claimed him for their spiritual father; and others acknowledged him as the helper of their faith and joy. In various other parts of the country, there were seals of his ministry. But while the Master secured to himself the honour of rendering the word efficacious, he often left the servant to cry, "I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought, and in vain."

To the duties of the minister, were added those of the professor's chair. In 1768, on the death of the Rev. John Swanston, he was elected by the Associate (Burgher) Synod to be Professor of Divinity. For this new station, he was well fitted by his previous studies, and he filled it with universal approbation to the time of his death. In his

conduct to his pupils, he blended the dignity of the teacher with the affection of the friend; and the respect he received from his students was the unextorted homage of affection and esteem. He behaved to all of them with studied impartiality. He had no favourite: if he had his secret preferences, he took care to conceal them. In his admonitions, he tempered fidelity with gentleness. He was, indeed, among them as a father among his children: he loved them and studied their good, and they loved him and regarded his counsel. No season of the year was so pleasant, both to the professor and students, as the two months of their attendance at Divinity Hall.

In the course of their studies, which usually occupied five years, he gave them a connected view of practical and polemical divinity. In his "*View of Natural and Revealed Religion*," and the "*Cases of Conscience*," annexed to his "*Practical Piety*," he has laid before the public the topics on which he insisted in his lectures to his students. He was also desirous they should be acquainted with Ecclesiastical History; and he compiled his General Church History, and the History of the British Churches, originally for their use. But while he studied to inform their minds, he endeavoured also to impress their hearts. Piety he esteemed the first of ministerial qualifications. He earnestly cautioned his pupils against studying divinity, as they would a system of philosophy. He pressed on them their

own concern in the doctrines they were to preach to others ; and assured them, that, without personal religion, they could never be profitable students of theology. At the close of each session, he took a solemn leave of them. His addresses on these occasions were most impressive and pathetic : they were seldom heard without tears. The many intelligent, useful, and acceptable ministers educated under his care, evince the success with which God has crowned his labours.

It remains, that we consider him as a writer. His reason for becoming author was neither emolument nor fame, but a desire to do good. All that he ever gained by his works was forty pounds. Many of his writings were, at first, intended solely for his own improvement, and circumstances afterwards determined their publication. When he had resolved upon the publication of any of his works, before sending them to the press, he commonly wrote them three or four times over ; and in transcribing them, he made such alterations and corrections as he judged proper. He usually also, before publication, submitted them to the revision of some of his brethren in whose opinion he could confide. The larger explication of the Shorter Catechism was the first work he published. This was, some time after, followed by his Lesser Catechisms, which have already passed through upwards of thirty editions. His other works were afterwards published at different in-

tervals. They speak for themselves. The number of editions through which many of them have passed, and the high estimation in which they are held by the pious of all different denominations, are the best proofs of their merit. Of all his works, there was none of them in which he so much laboured, as his Dictionary of the Bible: and his pains have been well bestowed. It is a book of such various, extensive, and acknowledged merit, that, perhaps, there is no work of its size more useful in the study of the Scriptures. It will be found peculiarly useful to students of divinity and young ministers. We do not hesitate to apply to it the words of Dr. Johnson respecting one of the publications of Dr. Watts: "Whoever has the charge of instructing others, may be charged with deficiency in his duty, if this book is not recommended."*

Mr. Brown's extreme modesty prevented him from cultivating the acquaintance of

* Another, though an unpleasant proof of the estimation in which this work is held by the public, is the number of spurious editions which have been published of it. Of these, there have been no fewer than five. One was published at Aberdeen. A second, in which the errors of the followers of Mr. Sandeman are disseminated under the name of Mr. Brown, was printed at Perth: this was afterwards republished at Montrose. A fourth was lately published at Newcastle; and a fifth, at Berwick: and an edition was lately published at Glasgow, which does not contain the author's last additions and corrections.

P.C. The reader is respectfully informed, that the edition of the *Dictionary*, which usually accompanies this work, and published by the same persons, is from the last edition published by the author himself, without any alterations from another pen, and now sanctioned by his sons.

many who respected his character, and valued his writings. He was, however, honoured with the correspondence of several men of eminence, both in Britain and America. In the number of his correspondents, we find the late pious Countess of Huntingdon. The reformed Dutch Church in America formed so high an opinion of his character, that they sent him a pressing invitation to be their Professor of Divinity. This invitation, and his correspondence with lady Huntingdon, he modestly concealed.

Mr. Brown was twice married: first, to Mrs. Janet Thomson, daughter of Mr. John Thomson, merchant, Musselburgh, by whom he had several children; of whom, the Rev. John Brown of Whitburn, and the Rev. Ebenezer Brown of Inverkeithing, alone survived her. She died A. D. 1771; "and I confidently trust," says Mr. Brown on this occasion, "went to her first and best Husband." About two years after her death, he was married a second time to Mrs. Violet Croumbie, daughter of Mr. William Croumbie, merchant, Stenton, East Lothian, by whom he left, at his death, four sons and two daughters: one of the latter is since dead.

Mr. Brown, for a number of years before his death, was much troubled with indigestion. In the beginning of the year 1787, this increased in an alarming degree, attended with general debility. Every mean was used to remove it, but without success.

His stomach seemed entirely to have lost its tone. His strength gradually declined, until, exhausted for want of its necessary supplies, nature sunk under its own weakness. During the progress of his disorder, his mind was serene, cheerful, and happy. He never expressed either impatience or apprehension. So perfectly was he resigned to the Divine will, that life or death were to him indifferent. He would not, as he emphatically expressed it, "turn a straw for either." His wish was, "that Christ might be glorified, whether it was by his life or his death." His only solicitude about life was, that, if it were lengthened, his ability for usefulness might be continued. But far from shrinking from death, he regarded it as an object of desire. His hopes of future happiness were founded solely on the mercy of God through the merits of Jesus Christ. On this subject, he never seemed to entertain a doubt. His language was not only that of hope, but of the full assurance of faith. He, on one occasion, declared himself as assured of his eternal felicity, as there was an eternity. A day or two before he died, when scarcely able to speak, he looked up, and said with a smile, "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation." His last words were, "My Christ!" having said this, he fell asleep in Jesus. He is gone, to join the spirits of just men made perfect: he adds another to that numerous and illustrious band of worthies, whose deaths present a

practical proof of the truth of their religion,—a proof, addressed at once to the understanding and the heart,—a proof, of which the infidel cannot get rid, without having recourse to the most palpable absurdities, which outrage reason, and set possibility at defiance. An infidel may die as a brute dies; he may die as a fool dies; he may die stupid, unconcerned, and unimpressed; he may attempt to conceal from the world and himself, the forebodings and apprehensions of his mind, by affected indifference and irrational frivolity.* But when did ever infidel meet death with the resignation, the hope, the triumph of a Christian? “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my latter end be like his!”

Mr. Brown died on the 19th of June, 1787, and was interred in Haddington church-yard on the 24th. His funeral was attended by many of his brethren and friends from a distance, and by almost all the respectable inhabitants of the town. Every one seemed eager to pay the last tribute of respect to a man, whom, when living, all revered. The Reverend John Henderson, of Dunbar, preached his funeral sermon to his congregation. But his family, his friends, and his flock were not the only mourners. The whole Secession Church felt his death

* The behaviour of David Hume at his death, was either an evidence of brutal stupidity at a moment so serious, or a proof of a mind ill at ease. It has often suggested to my recollection, the description of the school-boy in the church-yard by night,

“Whistling aloud, to keep his spirits up!”

as a common loss ; and there was scarcely a single pulpit in it which did not, on the Sabbath following, resound with his name and his worth.

Mr. Brown's relations, out of respect to his memory, have erected a neat monument over his grave. It stands near the West end of the Church, and bears the following inscription, with which we conclude this short narrative.

TO
The Memory
 OF
MR. JOHN BROWN,
 THIRTY-SIX YEARS MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL
 AT HADDINGTON,
 AND TWENTY YEARS PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY
 UNDER THE ASSOCIATE SYNOD.
 AFTER MAINTAINING AN EMINENT CHARACTER
 FOR
 PIETY, CHARITY, LEARNING, AND DILIGENCE,
He Died
 REJOICING IN HOPE OF THE GLORY OF GOD,
 AND ADMIRING THE RICHES OF DIVINE GRACE
 TO HIM AS A SINNER,
The 19th of June, A.D. 1787,
 AGED 65 YEARS.

BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHO DIE IN THE LORD, FROM HENCEFORTH :
 YEA, SAITH THE SPIRIT, THAT THEY MAY REST FROM
 THEIR LABOURS ; AND THEIR WORKS DO
 FOLLOW THEM.

THE
CHRISTIAN JOURNAL
OF A
SPRING-DAY.

“**N**OW I am half awakened ; but feel a strong “inclination to sleep.” Alas ! my sluggish soul ! how long wilt thou sleep in thy sins ? How often hath God roused my conscience to sharp trouble, stinging conviction, and alarming terrors of his law ? How often hath he half awakened my affections by the pleasant gales of his spiritual influence ? but have not my sloth, my stupidity, stifled and checked those impressions ? Have not I, times without number, cried out, “ Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all ; yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep ! ” How long have I “ staid in the place of the breaking forth of children ? ” How often have I, like Zarah, put forth my hand toward a spiritual birth, and then drawn it back ? What numerous convictions have I stifled by childish pastimes, carnal business, presumptuous sinning, or by legal prayers, vows, and attempts towards duty ? How often have passing concern for eternal salvation, inward ravishment in prayer, in reading or hearing God’s word,* and fearful returns to wallow in sinful practices, alternately prevailed with me ?

* Isa. lviii. 2. Matth. xiii. 20.

"Again fallen asleep, I have dreamed the most "unsubstantial and incoherent fancies." Nay, alas! my life, my religion, my hopes of heaven are but an empty dream! quickly shall this world, which I make my portion, my ALL, be as a dream which passeth away; and those eternal things, which I have reckoned unsubstantial dreams, become sad earnest. "One calls me to arise." Ah! how often, how loudly hath God called to my soul, "What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise and call upon thy God:" it may be that he will think upon thee, that thou perish not. It his high time for thee to awake out of sleep, for now is thy damnation or salvation nearer, much nearer than at thy birth. "Now is the accepted now; now is the day of salvation. To-day, if thou wilt hear his voice, harden not thy heart; boast not of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

"My strength is not yet fully recovered; since "my late fever, I find my body is never so fresh "and vigorous as once it was." And feel I not the weakness of my soul, that she is no way recovered from the sinful, the dangerous fever, which I contracted in my mother's belly? More than twelve years have I lien in the fever of outrageous lust, and flaming enmity against the Most High! even now, the quintessence of hell reigns and rageth within me. Lord, was not I in baptism early,—deeply, sworn to be wholly and only thine? Hast thou not all my life loaded me with thy benefits? And do I thus foolishly, thus wickedly requite thee, with treachery and hatred for thy love? Of thy mercy, my late dangerous sickness was not unto death: and if

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It had, where had my soul now dwelt? Certainly "with devouring fire,—with everlasting burnings." But what am I better of either trouble or deliverance? Have not I been blessed and chastised, smitten and smiled upon, by providence; and yet still an outrageous enemy to God, a flagrant rebel still? Have not I hardened myself, both by mercies and judgments; made my heart, my "face harder than a rock, and refused to return?" What dross have I gathered, even in the hot furnace of my late affliction! What a precious season of grace, a concurrent time of youth, trouble, and of the striving of God's Spirit, have I irrecoverably lost!

"The clock strikes five." It is the knell of my departed hours; it informs me that sixty more minutes of my time are departed from me; gone to the judgment-seat of God, to bear witness against my sloth and wickedness: Alas! how many millions had before posted thither, on the same errand? Now my time is shorter; and yet my work of preparation for eternity is, by my countless crimes, larger than ever. "Though the slumbers of the night have stopped my hearing of the hours, yet neither the clock, nor time, her foundation, have a moment retarded their course." Are there no midnight slumbers of time? Alas! in this state, whether I slept or waked, now of a long time my judgment lingereth not, and my damnation slumbereth not.* "Hark! the morning bell rings, to rouse mortals from their lazy couch." Presage this, to me, of the mighty angel's uttering his awful voice, and swearing "that time shall be no longer:"

* 2 Pet. ii. 3.

memorial to me, of the great archangel's summoning me up from the grave, to receive the just sentence of my eternal damnation. Make it, my soul, a present alarm, to cause me to hasten an escape for my life; and tarry no where in the plain of a natural state, lest I be consumed. Oh that I knew what to do to be saved!

"Now I have got up from my bed; hard and uneasy have I lien on it." Is this a prelude of an uneasy, an eternal bed of flaming fire in hell for me; who, instead of lying with Jesus in his bed of everlasting love, on his green bed of the well-ordered, ever-pleasant, and flourishing new covenant, have all my life lien in the arms of a fiery law, and a deceiving devil? * How unwillingly doth this polluted, this natural bed, so long bear her corrupt burden—an enemy to God! How often would she have gladly cleft in twain, to drop me quick into eternal flames! How astonishing, that the patience of an abused, an angry God, should so long bear with me! "Now the soles of my feet, and no more, stand upon or touch the ground." But, woe me, the earth, the world, fills my heart, and is fixed in it; there it is touched, loved, chosen, and delighted in, as my God and portion. † The Spirit of life from God never entered into me, to make me stand on my feet ready to walk in his way; never made me stand on Jesus' righteousness, that sea of glass mingled with fire, before the throne of God.

"My clothes are put on, and the nakedness of my body is covered." But the filthy nakedness of my soul still appears: never did I put on the Lord Jesus

* Song i. 14. and iii. 7, 8. † 1 John v. 13.

for righteousness and strength ; never did I put on the new man of a holy nature ; never was I clothed with humility, but am wrapt in filthy rags of self-righteousness, abominable corruptions, and fearful curses. Who knows how soon I may be dragged out of life ; dragged from the grave to the judgment-seat of Christ in this condition ; and driven from his bar clothed with shame, confusion, and curses ; to be set up an everlasting spectacle of wickedness and woe, to angels and men ! Oh ! it is heartless work to adorn a dunghill body, and deck it for eternal fire ! Clothes, ye monuments of my sin, had I never transgressed against God I had never needed, never worn you : memorials of my meanness, what are you, but the offspring of the dunghill, the old castings of the flock, or the excrements of the silk worm ? Why, then, should I be proud of you ? Why adore you, as my God ? Why make you my great care and honour ? How often, within these twelve years, have I changed my clothes ? but never my sins, my cursed evil heart of unbelief !

“ Now I have read a portion of God’s word, and “ said my prayers.” Alas ! I have but said, not from the heart poured forth, my prayer : and since “ I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me : my sacrifice is an abomination to him ; ” how much more when I bring it with this wicked heart ? I have set up the stumbling block of beloved lusts in my heart, and of monstrous deeds in my life ; therefore shall the Lord wrathfully answer me by himself. “ I wash myself.” Unhappy hands and head, to little purpose, and with small pleasure, do I wash you for unceasing woe, for endless fire ;

while my inward parts remain filled with all unrighteousness, uncleanness, pride, deceit, debate, malignity, hatred of God, and every other abominable lust ! Corrupt heart, wilt thou not be clean ? when shall it once be ? How long, by attempts to self-righteousness, shall I wash myself into deeper stains, greater filth ? I can neither perform self-righteousness, nor flee from it. Oh, Jesus ! canst thou not wash me in thy blood, that cleanseth from all sin ?

“ My mirror, thou shewest me a youthful countenance, sparkling eyes, and rosy cheeks.” But beauty is vain : quickly shall these eye-holes be the beaten path of noisome vermine : quickly shall the loathsome worm crawl, lodge, and feed upon these lovely cheeks : then shall “ my comeliness be turned into corruption.” Unhappy face ! how have I esteemed and looked at thee more than at JEHOVAH’S countenance, and the brightness of his glory ?—and, as my reward, must the abominable insect, and the flames of Tophet, and the inward anguish of my soul hereafter deform thee ? “ My countenance falls.” No wonder : I am condemned to have my everlasting portion with the devil and his angels ; “ He that believeth not, is condemned already ; and the wrath of God abideth on him.” Already I feel myself in the case of Cain ; the Lord hath no respect to me ; or to mine offering : already I am under his curse, driven out from the presence of the Lord. “ How often have I examined the skin of my face, and “ adjusted my hair and mine apparel, in this glass.” But have I never examined the state and frame of my heart, and the course of my life, and adjusted these by the mirror of the divine word ; the holy law

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of the most high God? If I had, ah! what an awful and abominable appearance should I make to myself? Alas! I never beheld the glory of the Lord Jesus, in the gospel glass, to be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord." Ah! how death and hell will bring down my well-dressed head, and stain all my raiment. "This medicinal juice of herbs I drink for my health, how bitter, but useful!" Happy they, who drink the bitterest convictions, the bitterest cups of tribulation, for the healing of their soul! But woe me, I never drank the healing juice of the Plant of Renown, to make me whole unto salvation. If I remain in this cursed, this Christless state, what avails it, whether my body die or live? The sooner I go to hell I shall go with the least guilt; and the more quickly know the extent of my future misery: If my days are lengthened, I but ripen myself for deeper damnation. Alas! "is mine iniquity greater than it can be forgiven?" Doth my unparalleled guilt confine the choice of God!—of INFINITE LOVE, to wrath alone? Better I had never been born; or had been formed a toad, or a serpent; that I might have been huddled up in everlasting forgetfulness. But I have been made for the day of evil. Ah!—Stop, my racked, my grieved soul; righteous is the Lord, and righteous are his judgments, though this moment I should descend to the pit. Oh! may not I, with the sorcerer, "pray God, if perhaps the thoughts of my heart may be forgiven me? It may be the Lord will be gracious."

"I sit down to breakfast." Suprising, that God gives me a crumb of bread to eat, or a drop of wa-

ter to quench my thirst! But alas! though it is a blessing in itself, it is cursed already, because I lay not to heart the one thing needful: my provision is but the food of the condemned; it fattens me for the slaughter of eternal wrath. How often, how plentifully, have I nourished my body, but never, never tasted of the bread which came down from heaven? Is not this to live as a beast; a devil?

"Now the worship of our family hath been es-
"sayed." But how can they prosper, how can their prayers be heard, while such an Achan, a Beelzebub, is amongst them? Alas! I am an offence to God, a curse, a plague to all around me!

"Without staff, or horse, I depart from this
"house." Oh house! so often polluted with my filth! so often witness to my guilt! how gladly wouldst thou crush me in thy ruins, and cast me forth into damnation? Oh earth, so often defiled under me; how gladly wouldst thou be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and eased of thy sinful load? Infernal lake, how art thou moved to meet me at my coming? Already, with horror methinks I hear the damned angels welcoming my soul, and in cruel derision asking me, "Art thou also become like one of us? Art thou become wretched as we?" Is this the fruit of all the instructive pains taken for thee by men? Is this the effect of all the favours of God? of all the offers of Christ? of all the strivings of the Spirit with thee?—Wretch that I am, I never made the Lord my refuge, the Most High my habitation! While I rush forward into eternity, no staff, no rod of God, is to comfort me: not one sentence of inspiration dare I claim, as the

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ground of my hope of eternal life. These twelve years have I run with footmen, and contended with horses, in posting towards everlasting ruin.

“Now that I look out to the open world,” every thing obvious flasheth confusion and terror into my conscience: every creature seems ready to appear before God, as a witness against me. “How wholesome and pleasant is the morning!” What a loss for health do those sustain, who lie slumbering on their beds! Thrice more awful loss hath my soul sustained, by sleeping away the morning of life in Satan’s bosom, amidst stupidity and unconcern! Oh dreadful! to live twelve years without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world! How impossible to recover these countless moments, so vilely cast away in the service of sin! Of what precious experiences of fellowship with God have I lost the season! What opportunities of serving God have I wasted! Cursed pastimes, which detained and drew me from prayer, from reading of God’s word! Never hath Jesus, “the day-spring from on high,” visited my soul with his enlivening, his refreshing, his heart-captivating influence: but how shocking a visit do I expect from him on the morning of the last day!

“How pleasantly the dew falls!” Lord Jesus, canst thou not be as the dew to my soul? canst thou not make me one of thy young converts, who are like “the dew from the womb of the morning?” Cursed unbelief, how hast thou resisted the power of this divine promise, and robbed Jesus of the honour of accomplishing it! “Here the worms creep out of the earth, to acknowledge their debt to

"him that waters it, and to sip this early dew." When, my soul, wilt thou creep forth from thine earthliness and carnality, to thank the divine Father of the dew, for all his kindness towards thee? When wilt thou desire and feed on Jesus, who is as the dew of Israel, and refresh thyself with the influences of his grace?

Lord, how long shall I desire, shall I sip up every thing but thyself? how long shall I remain more brutish than the basest insects? "Heedlessly I have trodden out the bowels of one of these innocents." Rather think, my soul, JEHOVAH became a worm and no man, that he might purchase and offer an everlasting salvation to me, his enemy; yet, through wretched carelessness, have I, times without number, trampled him under my feet, trodden on the bowels of his infinite compassion. What guilt! what unparalleled guilt is this! "Yonder creeps the slow-paced snail, with her shell, her prison on her back: how sweetly she feeds on the moistened product of the earth!" Far, far slower is the motion of my soul towards God: in twelve years I am not a hair-breadth nearer him; nay, mine evil heart of unbelief makes me daily depart from him. Not so much with the prison of a frail body, as with the entangling load, the insupportable burden of iniquity, and law curses, am I retarded, or rather stopped, from every good motion. Oh! could I, under this awful pressure, creep towards Jesus Christ, for refreshment and relief!

"Yonder, in this early hour, the mole casts up the earth: it is in pursuit of a poor worm, which yonder bird awaits to devour as soon as it appears

"on the surface." Ah! what a bustle hath my soul made, for that which is more insignificant than a worm! and how often, like this worm, am I pursued on the one hand, and waited for on the other! From below, Satan haunts for my precious life; from about, the world waits to devour me; from within, unnatural lusts promote my ruin; from above, God is angry with me every day, he watcheth for the evil to bring it upon me, and is ready to "tear me in pieces, while there is no deliverer;" from below, hell is moved to meet me at my coming; and from above, the heavens wait to reveal mine iniquity, and pour destructive vengeance on mine head:—"Whither shall I flee for help, and where shall I leave my glory?"

"Yonder sow returns to her wallowing in the mire." And when I was in a fair way to escape the pollutions of this world, through the knowledge of Jesus Christ, how often have I returned to the vile courses, which once occasioned deep remorse to my conscience? "How this standing pool swarms with the vernal fry of toads, frogs, and like abominable beasts!" How like my heart! It is "of old, as a standing pool of water," never hath it been "emptied from vessel to vessel." Some early outward prosperity I have enjoyed; and it swarms with lusts and their offspring, which Satan hath engendered in my bowels. Oh unclean thing that I am! spring-tides of youth and gospel opportunities have but increased and nourished my abominations, and the spawn of hell within me! "Yonder crawls the high swollen toad; her ugly aspect I cannot behold." If I cannot behold her, as she came from

her Maker's glorious hand ; how shall JEHOVAH look on me, ten thousand times more loathsome in his sight, how full of abomination, and yet swollen big with self-conceit ! Vain heart, flattering friends, why puff me up with the poison of pride ? "The proud the Lord knoweth afar off."

"Here comes the dull, the lazy ass." O that condescending Son of God, who came, "meek, and lowly, having salvation, riding on an ass, a colt the foal of an ass !" O my astonishing stupidity and dullness ! "the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib?" but I do not know ; I do not consider ; I think not "whose I am, nor whom I serve; nor where I may rest and feed ; nor can I, a wild ass, drink my fill of the spiritual life, the living waters which live among the hills of divine ordinances.

"Here pass me numerous loads of coal : already, perhaps, they provide for the winter cold : how perhaps some drive home the fuel which shall "consume their dwelling, and burn their flesh." But, what have I laid up for death and eternity ? Nothing but fuel of curses and corruption, to consume me for ever in hell. "How is the way broken "with the wheels of carriages." Rather think, my soul, how the Almighty is pressed under me ! how he is "broken with my whorish heart," and sinful life ! how he is abused by millions every day ! by millions whom he formed, preserves, and feeds ! O his stupendous patience "and long-suffering towards the vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction !" "Here the weary beast falls under his load : his body is "weak, his back galled, his way bad, his burden

* heavy; yet how cruelly the driver lasheth him, "because he cannot arise!" Behold a picture of myself! how am I fallen by mine iniquity! devoid of strength to perform what is good! how often galled with conviction and trouble! how laden with guilt and corruption! how lashed by Satan and my lusts into sinful courses! how lashed by conscience, because I am unwilling and unable to obey the law! how quickly shall devils drive me, under mountainous weights of guilt, where "I shall be tormented for ever and ever!"

"How yonder house smokes! doubtless it is on fire." No smoky pillars of love to a Saviour appear in my life,* but sinful practices testify, that the fire of corrupt lusts rageth and burns within me! and that the fire of eternal wrath is kindling, and prepared for me.† "One of this family hath been burned with the house." How easily can God make our created comforts our crosses, our torments! When my heart is inflamed with the hatred of God, how dangerous is my case! who knows how soon I may awaken in everlasting fire! how soon death may burn me out of this world! how quickly, amidst raging flames, I may rise from the grave to enter into everlasting burnings? Lord Jesus, if it be possible, pluck me as a brand out of the burning, and quench me in thy blood.

"Here is a shambles; congealed, abused blood lieth every where." What is my life, but a field of blood? destruction and misery are in all my ways. What, but a field of blood, is my whole attendance on religious duties? what have I done, but mur-

* Song iii. 7.

† Isaiah xxx. 33.

dered the Son of God, and trampled his blood under my feet ! What terrors seize my heart ! Can such crimson crimes be forgiven ! "The tender lamb is "stretched for the slaughter ; yet opens not his mouth." With what thoughtless unconcern doth my soul lie bound with cords of wickedness, ready for the killing stroke of divine wrath !—Without gain-saying, Jesus, the Lamb of God, submitted to all the bands of guilt, all the stabs of infinite indignation : he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, to save me ; and yet, more than any, have I despised and rejected him : he was "despised and rejected of men, and I esteemed him not." "Hark how yonder slaughtered bullock roars !" Smitten with the stroke, pierced to the heart with the stroke of his Father's justice, how did Jesus, the fatted calf, pour forth strong cries and tears to him that was able to save from death ! "My God, my God ; why hast thou forsaken me ? why art thou so far from the words of my roaring ?" If I die without him, how must I for ever roar in hell ? Lord, give me Christ, or else I die.

"Now the butcher shaves the neck of yonder "sow that he may give her the killing stab." So Satan tickles and flatters my soul that he may murder her ; and hurry me into the second death ; into endless damnation.

"Here enters one, I suspect, with stolen or smuggled goods." Still the eye of the adulterer, and of the thief waits for the twilight ; they are in the terror of death, if morning overtake, or men know them : but doth not the Lord know ? doth not the God of Jacob consider ? What avails it, that my sins

are mostly hid from men? the Lord is entirely acquainted with all my ways : what I am before him, so much am I, and no more.

“Yonder stands a whited, a painted sepulchre, outwardly beautiful, but inwardly filled with rottenness and dead men’s bones.” Ah, whited wall, painted sepulchre that I am! with some outward shadows of early piety, but inwardly swarming with devils and filthy lusts. Was ever heart so vile! so dead! so rotten as mine! “Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.”

“How crooked is this path!” And, how have I gadded about to change the way of my life! and whither do all the turns of my practice lead me, but to the lake which burns with fire and brimstone! — “Them that turn aside to crooked ways, shall the Lord lead forth with the workers of iniquity.”

“Yonder burns the old, the withered, moory heath, that fresh pasture may spring for the flocks.” To make way for the new heavens and the new earth, at Jesus’ second coming, shall the elements melt with fervent heat, and the earth and the works therein be burnt up.” Thrice awful conflagration for me! When I, with multitudes, who, like old heath in the desert, know not when good cometh; who hath been unprofitable, and unto every good work reprobate,” shall flee from the kindled world; and the flaming pit shall receive us; “there shall be weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.” But was not the blessed Jesus burnt with his Father’s wrath, that sweet nourishment might spring up in him for his chosen flock? Cannot he give me “the spirit of judgment, and the spirit of

burning," to consume my old lusts, that a new growth of grace may spring up in their stead? But why should I thus still flatter God, and lie unto him with my false tongue! An awakened conscience, and raised affections, indite good words; but my heart is not right with him: my tasting of his good word, and of the powers of the world to come; my being enlightened, and receiving the word with joy; my delight in approaching to God; my requests for the destruction of sin, are attended with the superlative love of it.* Self-love is the source of all with me. I supplicate for grace, just because I cannot be saved without it; I beg deliverance from sin, just because it disquiets my conscience, and condemns me to eternal fire. Woes me! If I restrain prayer, my conscience rageth, and assures me of damnation; if I perform it, I "compass God about with lies and deceit." My religious exercise, if thus continued in, will break out into a viper; should I now fall away from it, it will be impossible to renew me again to repentance. Lord, to what a fearful crisis is my soul brought? Oh make haste to help me! O God make no tarrying! "Probably some compassionate moor-fowl sits amidst the fire, protecting her young, till herself be consumed." So my heart cleaveth to my lusts, her accursed brood, that though the fiery law, entering my conscience, threatens me with certain ruin on their account, yet I cannot, I will not leave them, nor forsake them. Mine end is therefore to be burned; with them to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. But did not Jesus, like her, for the protection and safety of his chosen seed,

* Isaiah lvii. 2. Matt. xiii. 20, 22. Heb. vi. 4, 5.

suffer the flames of his Father's wrath? O were I the meanest of their number; to wash the feet of his servants! Lord Jesus, hide me under the shadow of thy wings; cover me with the feathers of thy Almighty love: let thy faithful promise be my shield and buckler; spread the skirt of thy bleeding righteousness over me; for thou art a near kinsman. Was it not for sinful men alone thy blood was shed? Is it not sinful men alone, whom thy salvation, thy gospel, suits? Is it not to their eternal life, that grace must for ever reign through righteousness? Is it not sinful men alone, whom the Father sent thee to save? Is it not sinful men alone, whose salvation is thy meat and drink?—Why then not save me? am not I sinful to a wonder? am I not the chief of sinners? Can ever any have a fuller, a clearer warrant to claim the salvation,—the goodness prepared for sinful men?—Thrice marvellous, that the greatness of my sin should prove my full right to apply to the Saviour!—What if I am appointed to wrath? what if my inability to believe proceed hence? No; 'it proceeds from my own wickedness.

“Here the potter makes out of the same lump “vessels to honour and others to dishonour.” Never fret, my accursed heart, at the predestinating purpose of God; hath not God power to make of the same human nature, some vessels prepared to glory, and others fitted to destruction? The deepest ruin in hell is my due reward: if I receive it, God can do me no wrong: if he bestow undeserved happiness on others, do I well to be angry? Is mine eye evil, because his is good? may not a sovereign God distribute his favours as he pleaseth?—But decrees

apart; secret things belong unto the Lord. Oh! Jesus, cannot thy mercy make an uncommon stretch to save me? If I am the greatest sinner that ever breathed, O let not mercy slip the opportunity of erecting an unparalleled monument of her power in me! Mercy, Lord, is all I want; mercy is all that I crave. What profit is in my blood, though I should go down to the pit?

"Doubtless the sun is risen, though unseen by me." And "if the gospel" of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, "be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel should shine into their hearts." Alas! am I still one of those who believe not? a mad refuser of the great salvation? a wicked rejecter of the divine Saviour? a faithless discrediter of the gospel report concerning Jesus, that in him there is eternal life for sinful men, and even for me, the worst? a vile blasphemer, who have, times without number, made the God of truth a liar? an outrageous and malicious enemy of the God of love? a murderous trampler on, and crucifier of, the Son of God? a despicable quencher, and resister of the Spirit of grace?—Be astonished, ye heavens! Were ever sins like mine!

"Now at last the sun appears: how beautiful and charming his aspect! how enlightening, quickening, refreshful, and fructifying his influence!" Thrice more glorious Sun of Righteousness; now I see thee clearly in the promise of the gospel! "It pleased God to reveal his Son in me." O what a sight! a Saviour dressed in divinity and blood! a

sight enough to melt a rock, and make a heart of iron move ! Blessed Jesus, how transcendently sweet to behold thee assume my guilt, and take my chains ! to see thee, who knew no sin, made sin for me, that I, who knew nothing but sin, might be made the righteousness of God in thee ! to behold thee, God blessed for ever, made a curse for me, that the blessing of Abraham might come on cursed me ! to see thee rising again, ascending up on high, to receive gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that God the Lord might dwell among them ! to behold thee exalted to be a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins ! sent to bless us in turning every one of us from our iniquities ! given of God for a covenant to the people, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the salvation of God to all the ends of the earth ! How sweet to behold thee, made of God to me wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption ! How my heart melts to hear thy powerful voice ! " My son, give me thine heart. Open to me, my love, my dove, my undefiled ; for my head is filled with the dew, and my locks with the drops of the night. I will betroth thee unto me for ever ; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness and in judgment, and in loving-kindness and in tender mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord."—Amen, Lord ; amen, so be it. Was ever rebellious sinner so courted, in sighs, in groans, in blood, of an expiring God ? Did ever pity thus stoop, to gain the heart of such a devil ?—How my soul is melted ! how it yields to thine almighty love ! how much sweeter thy promises than honey to my

taste! Oh! how they sink to the very centre of my heart! Content, a thousand times content, to be an everlasting miracle of thy redeeming grace; content, that God, in saving me, "shew forth to the ages to come, what is the exceeding riches of his grace," and virtue of his righteousness. Blessed, O Jesus, be thy name, that thou never saidst, Give me a sincere, a pure, a holy, humble heart; but requirest me to give it as it is! I am ashamed, confounded, and affrighted at the view of my heart; but at thy call, such as it is, I give it thee; "a mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and abominations in the earth; a habitation of devils, and cage of every unclean and hateful lust." Lord, accept the monstrous present; wash in thy blood, and transform into thine image, a heart "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." But will God indeed dwell in it, and make it a fit habitation for himself through the Spirit? Astonishing condescension! stupendous love! but let his will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. My very heart and flesh cry out, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, why standest thou without?"—How sweetly a fiery law, dreadful justice, a guilty conscience, an accusing devil, at once, are all silenced by one draught of bleeding love! Love-touched, captivated, all-awed, all-ecstasied, all lost in trembling wonder, I meet my dread, my dear Bridegroom; my life, my lover, my sweetness, and my ALL. O wonder! wonder! an espousing God, and I the worthless bride! Be wholly his, that heart, that soul, that life, his blood, his pity saved.

"How quickly doth gazing on this natural sun

“dazzle mine eyes! how it renders sublunary
“things to me without form or comeliness!” Sweet
Jesus, how base, worthless and deformed, this pass-
ing blink of thy glory renders all things besides
thee!—Thou world, what loss and dung do thy ho-
nours, profits, and pleasures, now seem to my soul!
all on earth is shadow; all beyond, all my Christ,
is substance. Too long I clasped created phantoms,
and I found them air. Oh, had I weighed them,
ere my fond embrace, what darts of agony had
missed my heart! O sin, self, self-righteousness,
once darlings of my soul, how loathsome, vile, and
abominable you now appear! “Whom have I in
heaven but Christ; there is none upon earth that I
desire besides him.” What am I, that he loved
me, and gave himself for me!—Stop here: admire
JEHOVAH’s kindness! Let me solemnly embrace the
promises; the whole of the new covenant, as all my
salvation, and all my desire. Let me pour out my
heart into my Redeemer’s bosom, and surrender all
my powers, all my passions, all my enjoyments, all
my gifts and endowments to him: “My beloved is
mine, and I am his.” Bear witness, ye surrounding
fields, ye warbling birds, ye listening angels, ye sa-
cred Three, that my Christ is mine, and I am
his, henceforth and for ever: my “Maker is my
husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name; the God
of the whole earth shall he be called. The Lord
JEHOVAH is my strength and song, and he also is
become my salvation.”)

“Here men go forth to their labour; and the
“cattle are driven from the stall to the plough.”
Now my soul hath been feasted as a calf in the

stall; let me go forth to my labour until the evening of death: let my "light so shine before men, that they seeing my good works, may glorify my Father which is in heaven." Truly, O Jesus, "I am thy servant, I am thy servant, thou hast loosed my bonds." May I henceforth know my owner, hear his voice, take up my cross, and follow him.

"Yonder runs a madman! ah! how he hath cut and mangled his flesh! perhaps he can neither be tamed nor bound: perhaps he hath been often chained and fettered, but has broken through all—Let me escape out of his way." What a mercy is the exercise of reason! how mad, how wicked, vilely to prostitute it, to oppose its Maker, and serve our sinful lusts! How often, ye children of men, do you thus abuse it! Till now, what a madman was I! what a destroyer of my wretched self! how, by every thing, Christ crucified, and his salvation not excepted, did I cut, wound, and mangle my immortal soul! how untameable and unrestrainable! how often bound by the laws and fear of men; by solemn vows; by awful commands; by piercing convictions; by ravishing influence; by galling afflictions from God! But all were broken through, as threads of tow, till Jesus brought me to myself, bound and drew me with cords of love, and caused me to sit down at his feet clothed and in my right mind.

"Here a horse gallops off with his rider." How impetuously have my mighty lusts, to the endangering of my life, carried me whithersoever they pleased! Into how much concupiscence, how many vile

abominations, have they violently hurried me! Deeply convinced, that their end would be death, I neither could, nor would, restrain them. To vanquish self, how divine; how laborious an art! nor can we feel a more dangerous plague, than reigning passion and a subject mind.

“Yonder feed a flock of geese; a covey of ducks.” Let me never resemble the first, in being heavy and high-minded; nor the last, in speaking much and doing little; in walking slow. Christ doth not ask what I say, but what I do more than others? “Into what odd shapes do these angry turkeys figure themselves!” Into what strange shapes do men of violent passions often form themselves! What enraged furies do they appear!—My soul, into what outrageous enmity against God have thy passions often transported thee! how often hast thou madly justified thy being angry with his word, his truth, his ordinances, his providence! how often, like a fury, have I belched forth angry words! how often have I been concerned in angry contests!

“In yonder field what number of cattle is yoked, how harmoniously they walk, and draw in yonder ploughs!” So let Jesus’ law and gospel concur, in breaking up and softening the fallow-ground of my heart; so, let my inward powers concur with his influence; so let me, with all saints, diligently draw in the pleasant, easy, and love-lined yoke of his law, which is holy, just, and good. “How the plough opens this hard earth! tears up the roots of the weeds!” So, Lord Jesus, while I live, may the mighty convictions of thy word, the powerful operations of thy grace, open and break my hard

and stony heart. So, may they cut up the deep-rooted lusts and corruptions within me. "How hard to plough this ridge on the way-side, which for many years hath been trodden upon as a common path!" Ah! how long have Satan and my lusts, made my soul an highway, a trodden path for "evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness, blasphemies!"—what a stretch hath omnipotent grace made to save me! "Here the plough starts; it refuseth; it cannot enter the rock." But bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, Jesus can plough, can melt, the flinty rock, the adamant heart; "his word is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart: her rocks and mountains melt before the Lord God of Israel." Even at the entrance of the God of Jacob, the flinty rock is turned into a water spring of godly sorrow. "Here the unskilful ploughman, or the unruly cattle, have made a multitude of balks, the furrows are out and in; much ground not broken." True image of my soul! through ignorance of spiritual exercise, through the rage of unruly passions and lusts, what hardness and unbrokenness remain in my heart! Not one step can I go straight forward in the paths of holiness.—Lord, plough me fully, and let thy grace sufficiently direct me, while I live. "Here the deluging rains, succeeded by scorching drought, and attended with much treading down, have made the once ploughed field almost as hard as ever." Alas! how many, after deep convic-

tions, become more hardened in sin ! how often do men add drunkenness to thirst ! How often, by remaining corruptions, by withdrawment of divine influence, by down-treading temptations, from Satan and the world, do saints lose much softness of heart, —much fitness to receive the word of God !

“Yonder stands a bag of seed, ready for casting into the earth. No doubt it is choice grain ; perhaps it hath been carefully steeped, to encourage its growth, and to preserve it from the hovering fowl, or crawling vermine.” Lord, how precious ; how fitly chosen are all thy words of truth ! how fully steeped in Jesus’ blood ! Are they not the new covenant in his blood ; and in him all yea and amen, to the glory of God ?—May the minister whom I hear, may every minister, thoroughly steep it in earnest prayer, and serious meditation, before he preach it. Lord, save us from sermons, which are chiefly the product of human learning, and common study. “Yonder the sower with heedless step and skilful hand, casts abroad his seed.” So let ministers ; so let every one, in his station, with labour and care, spread abroad the savour of Christ’s name. So let them sow inspired instructions, on all under their care, as to win souls to him. So, Jesus, cast abroad the influences of thy truth into our soul, and cause thy word to dwell richly in us. “Without seed, we cannot expect increase.” And how can we expect the salvation of those who grow up destitute of the knowledge of divine truth ? Without this, how apt are summer-seasons of gospel ordinances to be altogether in vain ! how many, through want of early instruction, live wicked and

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barren, and at last descend to the darkness of Tophet!—There is no salvation in any other but Christ; no eternal life, without the knowledge of the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. “Whosoever abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, which leadeth into all truth, he is none of his. God’s professed people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. To a people of no understanding, he will shew no favour. All shall be damned who believe not the truth. Where no vision is, the people perish. While men continue in heathenish ignorance, they are at that time without Christ, being aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. Rarely do we find any pleading for the salvation of heathens, gross heretics, or grossly ignorant persons, but such as are practically of that number.* But, O the kindness of God! the kindness of parents to me! the very truths which were instilled by them into my childish mind, have to-day been made seed which shall remain; a well of water that shall spring up to everlasting life. “Perhaps this grain “was pretty necessary for its owner’s summer provision: but he casts it into the earth that it may “bring forth an abundant increase, may produce “food to the eater, and seed to the sower for an “after season.” Let me chiefly lay up for the future, the eternal period: be earthly cravings ever so urgent, it is preparation for eternity that will

* Acts iv. 12. John xvii. 3. 2 John 9. 2 Thes. ii. 11.

Prov. xxix. 18. Eph. ii. 12.

produce the true, the abundant, the happy increase : a handful of this shall shake with fruit like tress ; let me, therefore, hearken and hear for the time to come. A dread, a sweet eternity ; how surely mine !—and if eternity belong to me, a poor pensioner on the bounty of an hour ; let me not look at the things which are seen, which are temporal, but at the things which are not seen, which are eternal.

“Thrice useful fields ; the support, the exhaustless granary of a world !” Thrice more useful God ! thrice more useful Jesus ! thrice more useful new covenant ! thrice more useful scripture !—the exhaustless granary of eternal worlds—Even the ransomed kings are for ever served by this field. On what but Godhead shall I for ever live ! Lord, if I lose thy love, I lose my all.

“Here the harrow follows harsh, hides the seed, and shuts the scene : were not the sown field immediately harrowed, how would the fowls devour, or the frost destroy the seed, and prevent the increase !” And if thou, Lord, do not with thy gracious influence, hide in my heart, that seed which I receive in reading and hearing thy word ; if, thou enable me not, quickly to cover it by earnest prayer and serious thought ; quickly shall Satan and his agents rob me of it ; quickly shall my blasting corruptions rob it to my soul ; and make it the “savour of death unto death.” How often have I gone from public ordinances, without one sentence impressed on my heart, and with scarce one retained by my memory ! “What numerous stokes of the harrow doth this tough, hard soil

“require!” O what a hard, a tough, an uncommon soil is my heart! Lord, never leave me nor forsake me; never take thy Holy Spirit away: never cease to strive with me—And never weary, my soul, of pondering and praying over JEHOVAH’s truths: thy hardness, thy stupidity, will require ten thousand turns.

“Yonder the clods are broken; the surface “levelled with the roller.” By the hammer of thy word, the influence of thy Spirit, and the roller of necessary trouble, O Jesus, bring down my pride, and soften my heart: without this, how unsightly will be my aspect! how barren my life!

“Here the seed dies under the clod, that it may “spring up to a glorious increase.” In his incarnation, Jesus, the great corn of wheat, fell into the ground: on Calvary he died, that, in his resurrection he might spring forth, the joyful parent of innumerable saints, the root of countless and unbounded mercies. In natural death, the ransomed die, that at the resurrection they may spring forth in endless glory. “In how thick; how beautiful “a breard the seed here springs up!” So let inspired truth, the seed of heaven, received into my heart, spring forth abundantly, in holy thoughts, gracious words, and righteous works.

“But, here the weeds overtop, and almost cover “the corny breard.” Lord, how often do thick and high-sprung weeds of corruption in my heart and practice, hide, even from myself, every proper appearance of grace! how often do the numerous, and active, naughty professors of Christianity overtop, and bury in obscurity, thy true witnesses and

sincere friends! "Here, with filthy, but useful
"dung, they fatten the land." O to count all
things but loss and dung to win Christ! My filthy
dung of sinful corruption, is only evil, tends only
to hurt and ruin: but blessed for ever be the God
and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that in his in-
finite wisdom and knowledge, he hath made it the
occasion, not the cause, of a most astonishing in-
crease of glory to God himself, honour to his Son,
and happiness to me; and that he makes it the fre-
quent means of driving me to the all-cleansing foun-
tain of Jesus' blood and grace; and of humbling me
in the dust before him.

"Without the warmth of the sun, and moisture
"of the clouds, the care of the husbandman could
"produce nothing." Without the concurrence of
Jesus' blood and Spirit, no human labour could con-
vert a soul, produce a good work, or produce a grain
of felicity. Nay, he must do all, and we nothing;
but stand still and see his salvation. "How sweetly,
"in this vernal rain, the clouds conceal their trea-
"sures to the field!" God's paths drop down fat-
ness. Ye sons of men, muse, praise; and look
forth lively gratitude: In lively spring, and her soft
scenes, I see my smiling God; I feel a present
Deity, and taste his joy, to see a happy world.
Sweet vernal fields! Thrice sweeter sacred word!
How JEHOVAH pours his stores of love, his melted
heart, into thy darling page, that messenger of grace,
where rapture flows on rapture: every line with
rising wonders filled, bow from its rainy pools, my
soul enraptured, drank the spirit of eternal joy;—of
that unutterable happiness which love alone bestows

upon her favoured few!—How soars my mind beyond the blooming earth! On swollen thought, my heart flies to the bosom of her distant, her ETERNAL FAIR; my Lord and my God.

“Notwithstanding the winter storms, is not this “field of wheat the most beautiful of all around?” Is not Jesus, that sweet substantial corn of wheat, after all his winter-scenes of woe, “fairer than the sons of men, chief among ten thousand, altogether lovely?”—How beautiful and comely the saints, who get clean, through great tribulation, into the spring-tide of everlasting happiness and bliss!

“Now the vegetables, which seemed dead in the “winter, revive in their order: their lately withered roots blossom abundantly: the glory of “Lebanon, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, “is given to them.” When the Sun of Righteousness draws nigh to his church, and makes the fructifying wind of his Spirit to blow upon her, how do her withered, nay, her dead members, “revive as the corn, grow as the lily, and cast forth their roots as Lebanon!” When he lifts up on me the light of his countenance, and sheds abroad his love in my heart by the Holy Ghost; how doth every dying remain of my languishing grace recover fresh life, vigour, and beauty!—And into what glorious bodies shall the dust, the rotten carcasses of saints, hereafter spring up! This corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality; then shall he change my vile body, and make it like unto his glorious body. Then, then, shall winter and death be swallowed up in victory.

“Now, countless insects, myriads on myriads

"creep from parental eggs. O feeble race! but of-
 "ten the sacred sons of vengeance against men! how
 "often, at God's command, they waste our fields,
 "and strip our trees! Bear witness, Zoan's field,
 "and you land of Ham." What am I, an insect
 of an atom world, that God should love me and give
 HIMSELF for me!—How can ever the sinful insect
 pay the mighty debt of love, which I owe to Christ
 my God! Had I ten thousand lives, gladly should I
 pay them, in hourly tributes, at his feet. O how
 my nothing soul is overwhelmed with his greatness.
 What am I, to conceive the nature of an infinite
 God! to possess the eternal ALL! Alas! I cannot
 begin to think of him, but my thoughts are con-
 founded; my heart is perplexed; my mind amazed;
 my soul is quite unhinged within me: His mercy
 exalts me; his justice depresseth me; his wisdom
 astonisheth me; his power affrights me; his glory
 dazzleth mine eye: the least glimpse of him makes
 me abhor myself. When I behold his smiling face,—
 how beams divine break from his eye!—how un-
 usual light wraps me, at once, in glory and surprise!
 how I admire, embrace, and bow, till I am lost in
 him! Thrice blessed! lost in MY GOD, MINE ALL!
 How often, with sweet reflection on the peaceful
 cross, all in his blood and anguish groaning, deep
 grasping, and dying, have, insect I, my Saviour seen!
 But did JEHOVAH die for the devilish insect me!—
 What shall I more say!—O that melting thought,—
 FOR ME! Christ! my great beginning and my end!
 my head! my God! my glory! and my All in all!

"How sweetly yonder doves feed on the new-
 "sown grain! they need to eat a plenteous meal.

“The summer, which pours fulness on other animals, will prove a time of scarcity for them.” You saints, while favoured with influences and ordinances, feed with unrestrained appetite on the heavenly seed of truth. You know what seasons of famine await you. Summers of outward prosperity to all around, may prove times of scarcity and want to your soul. But rejoice, ye ransomed doves, your harvest of eternal plenty shall more than balance your present straits. “Yonder is the pigeon-house, where these feathered animals lodge, and to which they fly for refuge.” So, in every strait, let my soul fly to Jesus, and lodge for ever in his love, that though I have lien among the pots of corruption and trouble, I may be as “a dove, whose wings are covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold ;” that I may resemble these birds in simplicity, meekness, innocence, fruitfulness, and chaste affection towards my husband Christ. “Perhaps the crafty thief, or “savage beast, lately pillaged this pigeon-house.” Lord, how often is thy church robbed and ruined by carnal politicians, proud schismatics, and erroneous men ! how are the souls of young professors wounded and slain ! how often is my heart pillaged by Satan, the world and my lusts ! But let us rejoice and be glad, that in our house eternal in the heavens, no pillage, no violence, nor destruction, shall be in our borders.

“Here two ways meet ; certainly one is a bye-path ; but both are so alike, that I cannot distinguish which is the high way. Let me ask at yonder house.” How often do the sons of men ; how often doth my soul, walk in bye-paths, in ways which

lead to destruction! How many things have the appearance, but not the substance, of true godliness! How often, by the various aspect of things, and the unhappy divisions in the church, am I brought to my wit's end, not knowing what to do, or whether to go? Lord, shew me the good old way; "send forth thy light and thy truth, let them lead me, let them bring me to thine holy hill." O lead the blind in the way which he knows not. "How fiercely this watchful cur barks at me, and warns the family of my approach!" Oh, were my conscience but as faithful to her trust! Alas, how many temptations; how many strangers, have entered my heart, without the least alarm or angry frown from her? How many pastors are but dumb dogs, lying down, loving to slumber, and encouraging others to sleep in their sins: yea, greedy dogs, that can never have enough of this world's enjoyments, and that prepare war against him who putteth not into their mouth. "How furiously the raging cur assaulted and threatened to devour me!"—How often have Satan and his agents, assaulted my soul? how often have my sinful passions, these unnurtured dogs, torn me to pieces? Lord, deliver my darling from the power of the dogs.

"Having the way pointed out by my friend here, "I must attend to his direction." Lord, let me always live up to my light, lest darkness come upon me. "To him that hath shall be given: if my eye be single, my whole body shall be full of light." "How easily might the benighted traveller slide in to this ditch!" To how many near and dangerous snares is my soul exposed! When I walk or sit

in darkness, Lord, be a light unto me. "Here grows the rush, but not without mire; how fresh her greenness! how quick her growth! but how naughty her inward substance, fit almost only for the fire?" So grows the hypocrite, by carnal motives and encouragements; his appearance of grace is often tall and flourishing; but his heart is unsubstantial and naughty, only meet for eternal flames. O my soul, judge thyself, that thou be not judged. "Here docks, nettles, wormwood, and other medicinal herbs, grow by the way-side; but being free and common, few prize them." Blessed Jesus, thou Plant of Renown, chief of all medicine, and of every thing else, how near, how free, how common, but, ah! how "despised and rejected of men!" "Here the scabby, naked sheep, is fallen into the ditch: if alive, pity bids me draw him out." Lord, how lately didst thou find me, lying naked, leprous, and vile, dead and dying in the ditch of trespasses and sins; and, at the expence of bearing my sin, thy punishment, and sinking in deep mire, where there was no standing, drew me out, laid me in thy bosom, quickened my heart, and said to me, **LYN!** O continue thy loving-kindness to one who knows it!

"Here comes my friend the courtier: I suppose he intends to visit his mistress." Blessed be the Lord, that my courtship, my marriage is begun with Christ. Courted with groans, with bloody tears of an incarnate God, my heart shall yield to death for love of him. God forbid I should indulge a meaner flame till I have loved the Lord. If there be any passions in my breast, I give them all away to him. I knew I the nerve about my heart, which did refuse

to beat with desire for him I would gladly curse and tear it out! All nature's art shall never cure my heavenly pains of love; and it is beyond the power of created beauty to make a similar wound. Jesus is, he must be mine: he is the great object of my waking thoughts, his lovely form meets every dream. Still I find him at my heart; dwell there; for ever dwell; my Lord, my love, thou art my husband; thou my ocean of pleasure; thou my God. In thee, all the passions of my mind exult, and spread their powers. Not all the glittering things above, could make my heaven, if thou depart. Life is my pain; heaven is my hell; immortality my curse, without thy love. Rememberest thou, my soul, the place where I was washed in his dear blood? where sin, with all her ghastly train, fled to the depths of death? where I, inflamed by love divine, was all devotion, all delight? where I enjoyed a visit half-a-day from my descending God; and with enraptured heart, heard him declare his love? Away ye visits, modes, and forms; away ye flatteries paid to sinful worms; away ye vain amours; ye empty stuff: but, Lord, thou life of all my joys, I can never enjoy enough of thee—With thee I could sit a winter-night, a month, on frosty ground; nor think the visit long, shouldst thou but tell thy love.—O! when he begins, my ear, my heart, is the willing captive of his tongue! When he counts over that heavy load, the sins he bore upon the tree, inward I love, I weep. I blush for shame when he talks over his bloody passion! How my heart is enraptured, and how drowned in tears! when he shews his pierced hands and melted heart! How it sets my soul on fire! with what

wishful eyes I pry into the sight ! When he recounts his victories ; how my heart heaves with joy, nor can my tongue refrain from praise. No charming fair one of creation wounds my heart : I breathe a purer flame ; I pant for the eternal love, the infinite unknown : my God, my Christ, my heart-strings break with love to thee.

“ What cloth is laid down to whiten on this “ bleachfield ! ” Lord, I lay down my polluted self, by thy river of life, which runs in the gospel channel, that in due time thou mayest present me without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. “ By steeping, watering, beating, and lying in the sun, shall “ this cloth be gradually whitened.” And by bathing me in thy blood, watering me every moment with thy Spirit, warming me with the rays of thy love, and beating me with divers afflictions, shalt thou, O Jesus, at last make me whiter than the snow ; all fair, no spot in me. “ Some of this cloth, and “ especially that which hath been newly steeped, “ appears more filthy than when first laid down.” And since God began to sanctify me, I am become more loathsome in mine own eyes : every new application of Jesus’s blood, every intimation of redeeming love to my heart, renders me viler in my own sight. Nay, how often do my corruptions work more outrageously than before ; how often do they far proceed to render my outward life more abominable ! O happy day when God shall root them out !

“ Here two mills, the one for grinding corn, the “ other for thwacking cloth, are driven by the same “ stream.” And when God’s Spirit comes down as floods, it sets all the powers of my soul a-going in

their proper order: then my faith, love, repentance, and new obedience, roll on with ease; whereas, at another time, it is beyond my power to make them move. "How quickly these wheels go round!" Such, my soul, is the outward lot of men; how often are the uppermost, the great, the noble, quickly degraded to be the offscouring of all things; while men of low degree are exalted to fill their place. Let me never take up my rest where such uncertainty prevails. Why should I dream of joys perpetual in perpetual change; of stable pleasures, on the tossing wave; of endless sunshine, in the storms of life? Why should a vain fancy hang my morning, or my noontide trances, with gorgeous tapestries of pictured joys: joy behind joy, an endless perspective? Whoever trusted to the world, and was not disappointed? If Jesus was bruised, was beaten with strokes of wrath, that he might be my food and raiment; having this, let me therewith be content.

"Yonder are two kilns, one for drying corn or malt, another for burning bricks." Think, my soul, how JEHOVAH'S SON was dried, roasted, and burnt amidst his Father's indignation, that his flesh might be meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed; and that he might be the corner stone, the whole substance of the building of mercy for me! And how must I be fashioned by free grace; inwardly fired with divine love, and outwardly fired in a furnace of affliction; that I may be to him a joy and rejoicing, and be made a fixed pillar in the temple of his God?

"This part of my way is so narrow, that two could scarce go a-breast; and so dangerous, I

"could hardly stumble off it, without falling into the horrid deep below." "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it;" but without walking in it, we must stumble into the bottomless pit, and be for ever pierced through with many sorrows. Let us, therefore, keep our heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life; take heed to our spirit, that we deal not treacherously against the Lord; keep our feet when we go to the house of God, and take heed to our ways, that we sin not with our tongue. Blessed be Jesus, that all his saints are in his hand; and that he keepeth their feet, and will not suffer them to slide from their new-covenant state.

"What a pleasant sound these feathered tribes make!" Lord! flocks, herds, birds, insects, trees, plants, flowers, all nature's birth praise thy goodness; all but thankless man; man most ungrateful, yet most obliged of all! O, hast thou tuned these birds to sing forth thy honour in their warbling throats, and wilt not put a new song in my mouth, even hosannas unto him who loved me, and gave himself for me? "How sweet their morning orisons! How common their wide fields of air, while man parcels out his little speck of earth!" How pleasant to observe God perfecting praise from the mouth of babes and sucklings! O how pleasant the sounds above, where ransomed millions, and established angels, pour forth their harmonious notes of highest praise! How common our wide fields of heaven, our immense salvation, our all-containing Christ! "Is not this wood the peopled rookery of my God? on him these winged tribes depend; by him they are nourished;

"to his praise they rear, they teach their rising
 "brood." Education for God! Are thy best laws
 solely expelled from the hearts of parental man?—
 Are these men? are they fiends, who rear, who train
 their babes not to know, not to praise, but to con-
 temn, to blaspheme, our all-supporting Lord? "How
 "curiously these pretty birds fix and fashion their
 "nests! how tenderly they bring forth their young!"
 How wise their teacher, God! What but almighty
 breath instructs these fowls of heaven? what but an
 all-inspiring God? Learn, my soul, to make Christ
 the bush burning, but not consumed; Christ the
 foundation of rocks; Christ the tree of life; Christ
 the secret place of the Most High, thy habitation,
 where thou mayest rest, and safely bring forth thy
 offspring of good works. "With what incessant
 "clamour do their young helpless families demand
 "their food; and O what passions, what melting
 "sentiments of kindly care, seize on the new pa-
 "rents!" Cry, cry, my soul, for the supply of all
 thy needs; thy parent is the God of love. How his
 heart turns! his bowels yearn towards me; nor while
 he lives shall I die, unless to live; nor while he is rich
 can I be poor. "How exactly each knows its nest."
 Lord, give me spiritual sagacity, to discern where I
 may find thee; let my admission into thy presence
 be so frequent, that I may not forget where to fly
 for rest and relief. "Here is a nest with young;
 "how curious and strong its contexture! how these
 "hungry pullets cry! how wide they open their
 "mouths for food!" And is not my nest of the new
 covenant ordered in all things and sure? O the ma-
 nifold power and wisdom of God that shine in it!

"This is my rest, here will I stay; for I have desired it." Here let my heart and flesh cry out, O living God, for thee; let me open my mouth wide, enlarge my desire, that thou mayest fill it. "One of these feathered nations, I am told, in cases of necessity, feed their young with their own blood." Sure I am, Jesus feeds his helpless seed with his sacrifice, his blood; and food indeed it hath been to my soul. "How high these pinioned people soar! At God's command, their eagle empress mounteth up; makes her nest on high: from thence she seeks her prey; her eyes behold afar off; and where the slain are, there is she." On wings of faith, love, holy desire, and heavenly meditation, mount up, my soul, as the eagle: set thine affections on things above, where Christ is at the right hand of God; view the King in his beauty; and the land that is very far off; where thy slain Redeemer is, there be thou; and by a life of faith on him, renew thy youth as the eagle. O happy period, when I shall return to more than days of youth! "Now the birds which slept in winter are revived and awakened: the travelling tribes who removed into warmer climates are returned." When God grants deliverance to Zion, saints shall revive, and sinners be converted: when he bestows a spring-tide on my soul, he quickens my dormant grace, restores my heart, and causeth me to return to my rest, even to the Lord, who dealeth bountifully with me. "Now the cuckoo bids the husbandman dispatch the labours of the spring." How solemnly do all things invite me to hasten to the day of God! remembering that the spring-season of gospel-opportunities shall

quickly be ended. "Yonder the sparrow chirps." Petty bird, but JEHOVAH's care; my Father's charge, Am not I much more so? though when forsaken of him I mourn, yet let me cleave to his house; nestle in the walls of divine perfections and promises, and in the covering of Jesus' righteousness. "How often have noisy birds decoyed me from their nest?" Alas, how often hath Satan, by a noisy world, decoyed me from observing his haunts in my soul! how often, by manifold delusions, hath he decoyed me from Jesus, my true, my everlasting rest.

"Here is a farmer's dwelling: how hard yonder poultry follow after one, who at last shuts them out!" But, blessed Lord, him that cometh unto thee, thou wilt in no wise cast out. Follow him, my soul, though he hide, though he threaten to exclude thee; knock, and it shall be opened. In, Lord, I must be in; in I will be; though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee. "Yonder another calls them to the hungry feast of a few corns, or crumbs; how they run, how they flighter to it!" And when Jesus inviteth me to a feast on all his fulness, shall not I bestir myself? Without a moment's delay shall not I run? shall not I fly to him? shall not my soul long, yea, faint for God, and heart and flesh cry out for him? "Here the feathered dam scarce nourisheth herself, but prepares food for her young: how kindly she invites them to eat!—Anon she will call them to hide themselves under her wings." Jesus "became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich:" he himself was hungry, to prepare food for us; his morsel he will not eat alone; but helpless, fatherless, sinful men, must eat

thereof. How often would he gather us, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and we will not? * “How fiercely she flieth upon every one “who attempts to hurt her young; and exposeth her “own life in their defence!” Ye savage mothers, learn her ways and be wise. But, O Jesus, how didst thou expose thyself to the wrath of devils, and men, nay, to the vengeance of Heaven; that thou mightest save and protect me? “But why do the “feathered tribe lift up their heads when they have “drunk? is it to render thanks to their heavenly “Benefactor?” Sharp rebuke to these worse than brutal men, who feed, who live, without acknowledging their Maker; sharp rebuke to my ingratitude; what mercies do I receive from God, without rendering unto him according to the benefits done me? Ask now, my soul, “What shall I render to him for all his gifts? I will take the cup of salvation, and will call on the name of the Lord: now will I pay my vows to him in the presence of all his people.”

“Yonder appear the demolished and falling cottages of the poor.” Alas, how our farmers add house to house, and field to field, till there be no place for others, but themselves left alone in the midst of the land! Read they no Bible, to inform them that such conduct is accursed of God? Know they not, that he that oppresseth and driveth out the poor, reproacheth his Maker, their guardian, and brings vengeance on himself? † But blessed be the Lord, that none can demolish the everlasting covenant, our house eternal in the heavens; our God,

* Matt. xxiii. 37.

† Lam. v. 8—10. Prov. xxii. 16. and xxiii. 10, 11.

who is our dwelling place in all generations : none shall deprive us of our possession. Ye children of poverty fear the Lord and he will make you houses.

“Here, in the adjacent field, the ewes bring forth “their young, and lick them into comeliness.” O my parent Christ, am I not the travail of thy soul? Kindly kiss me with the kisses of thy month, and make me clean through the word thou hast spoken to me. Polluted monster I am ; but let thy time be a time of love ; let me be washed, let me be sanctified, let me be justified, in thy name, O Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Love me, and wash me from my sins in thy blood. “These lambs are “brought forth in good licking, and most are immediately able to follow their dam.” No creature is born so helpless as man : let, therefore, my help and my safety come from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. “Here the tender shepherd carries a “weak lamb in his arms.” Sweet memorial of my adored Redeemer ; he carries weak and infirm saints, nay, all his lambs in his bosom of inconceivable love. God is their refuge, and underneath them are the everlasting arms of his power and grace. “Sweetly “these lambs browse on the blossoms and tender “buds of this prickly furze.” How much more profitably doth Jesus feed his people with his afflicting rod ? How sweetly he nourisheth them by the ordinances of his grace, which are but despicable and troublesome to carnal men ?—“By these things do men live, and in them is the life of my soul : a day in thy courts is better than a thousand.” “Yonder “lie the remains of some member of the flock, which “died of itself, or was torn to pieces by the ravenous

"beast." How many professed Christians doth a hard winter of adversity kill, and make them cast off all pretences to holiness? How often the hurt which we do ourselves in trouble, cleaves to us afterwards, and bringeth us to the gates of death? How often, in the spring season of deliverance, doth Satan tear and slay such as had nobly sustained the winter-blasts of affliction? How often is a spring of divine influence attended with murderous persecution? "Here is a tender lamb, whose mother is either dead or destitute of milk. Either another must suckle it, or it must be carried home for nourishment." Lord, when one friend, one outward comfort, fails me, provide me another: and when all fail, receive me home to thy glory, that where thou art, I may be also; that the Lamb in the midst of the throne may feed me, and lead me unto living fountains of water. "But are not the flocks and herds, many of them, now lean?" Alas, how many are the worse for the winters of trouble! But let them only waste the flesh of my old man; Lord, when shall he wax lean, and his face grow pale?—In this spring-tide of youth, of gospel-opportunity, and of divine influence, how great is my leanness!—Oh! when shall I be fat and flourishing; strong as David, as the angel of the Lord?—When I enjoy a vernal refreshment of Jesus' love, I feel my leanness and weakness more and more. O strengthen me in the Lord my God!

"Now I have a prospect of the sea." How fast approaches that solemn period when I shall stand on the shore, and see nothing before me but the sea, the ocean of eternity! Let Jesus' everlasting righteousness be mine; and eternity shall be my glory

and joy: O Eternity! it is thine to crown the joys above, to knit the bundle of life together. "Yonder lies a shipwrecked vessel." What if in youth I, like her, set fair out; and carry well, till a stormy trial overtake me, and then make "shipwreck of faith, and a good conscience?" My soul, be not high-minded; but fear. "How fast yonder roaring billows kiss the shore, and die." And what do men, even the most noisy, that "cause their terror in the land of the living," but salute the shore of life, and die? One generation cometh, and another goeth away: human life affords little more than to look about us, and die. Do not I, Lord, "desire to depart and be with thee, which is far better?" "What excellent manure for the field, or useful ingredients for glass, are these sea-weeds?" Solid thoughts, fetched from the ocean of eternity, are an excellent means to fructify our heart, and give us a just prospect of the vanity and emptiness of outward enjoyments.

"Here, within the watery mark, crawls the awkward catching crab." How like the covetous heart, that desireth, that catcheth at every thing it feels or sees? How like the heart which holds fast deceit, and refuses to let it go? May I earnestly covet Jesus, the best thing; may I hold him fast, and refuse "to let him go!" "What a multitude of mussels, wilks, and like shell-fishes, abound on this shore! how nicely their weak bodies are protected by their shelly mansions!" Since I have no might, hide thyself, my soul, in Jesus Christ; let him, as my covering, my lodging, defend me from every danger of hell or earth.

“Here is a salt-work : just now the pans are “going.” What hot labour is here, to get our food seasoned ! But ten thousand times hotter work was required to establish the new, the everlasting covenant of salt, and to render it “well ordered in all things, and sure ;” and to provide an infinite granary, filled with the salt of grace, to season our heart, our speech, and conversation. May all my sacrifices be salted with this salt of my God !—O what diligence and care it requires to keep this “salt in ourselves, and be at peace with one another !”—And how terrible to be salted with fire in hell for ever !

“Here is a deep mine.” O infinitely deeper ! O unfathomable mine of Jesus’ love ! of his grace and truth !—“In him it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell. In him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Can I be poor, when all is mine ! Oh enrich me for ever out of thy bottomless treasures, thy unsearchable riches : out of thy fulness let me receive, and grace for grace.

“Here is a quarry of hard stone : what labour, “what digging is here ?” O the ten thousand-fold labour : the sweet, the tremendous labour, where-with God digs up hard-hearted sinners from the pit of corruption ! Look, my soul, to the flinty rock whence thou wast hewn, and in the horrible pit whence thou wast digged. Prize, O prize the little stone, Christ that sure foundation, that tried, corner-stone, which was “cut out of the mountain of mankind without hands.” May he quickly subdue and break in pieces every opposition, and become a great mountain, filling the whole earth with his glory !

“What curious engines, some moved by water, others by fire, for extracting the moisture; or metal from the bottom of the mine: for separating the metal from the dross; or to figure it into proper shapes! What numbers of people are supported by this undertaking!” Rather, my soul, admire the infinitely more amazing, more costly, and curious engine of the new covenant; by means of which, my lust, my hardness, my obduracy, are drawn from the depths of my heart; and I am melted, beaten, and fashioned in a tool fit for the master’s use: by means of which, all the inestimable benefits flowing from JEHOVAH’s deep purposes, bottomless wisdom, and unfathomable love, are brought near to us. Stupendous engine, of whose wheels the rings are dreadful: in which the unsearchable riches of God are in a manner exhausted: springs not thy motion, thy efficacy, from the floods, the flames of JEHOVAH’s loving-kindness? Is it not owing to the streaming blood, the fiery death of an incarnate God? By this is every promise ratified; by this was Jesus brought again from the dead: by virtue hereof shall all his members be drawn after him: by it are the streams of grace, mercy, and peace, drawn from the deeps of Godhead, and made to run among men on earth; and to run for ever in the inheritance of the saints in light. Stupendous discovery of God! O what dark decrees, Jesus’ covenant, his cross, Calvary, and redemption through his blood, make plain! Never did archangels know so much of God before: nor dare a creature guess which shines most,—the justice or the mercy—the vengeance or the love. Awake, my

heart ; awake at the loved view, awake ; what can awake thee, unawakened by this ? Godhead expended on human weal ! Godhead expended on worthless, on sinful, on wretched me ! Lord, how my heart glows and trembles at thy love immense ! love immense, inviolably just ! what heart of stone but glows at thoughts like these ! should ere they glance on me, unraptured, uninflamed ! how my soul is caught the prisoner of amaze ! how surrounded with sovereign blessings, rushing in clusters from the cross ! What shall I render to him for his goodness ? Praise flow, flow highest praise, if wonder will allow ! May I breathe no longer than I breathe away my soul in love, in praise, to him who gave himself for me ! Ye sun, ye moon, ye stars of light, ye fowls, ye flocks and herds, ye fields, ye seas, all ye creatures, praise the name of my Almighty Love : ye ransomed, extol the Lord with me ; let us exalt his name together. Shall angels unredeemed have songs ; and men no tunes, no tongues to praise ! O may we lose our useless lips, when they forget to praise ! We are not our own, we are bought with a price ; therefore let us glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's : God's dearly bought ! O ye idle, ye starving sons of men, dwell here, and see, not work, the salvation of God. What an innumerable company that no man can number, is this everlasting covenant able to maintain ?

“ Now I am come to a small rivulet ; lo, how he winds about to obtain the lowest ground for his channel ! and what opposing banks and stones he must nevertheless run over ! ” And, into humble hearts, the Spirit, that river of God, delights to

run ; and often most when they are in the lowest case ! he hath respect unto the lowly, but the proud he knoweth afar off. But, alas ! what pride, what sin, what stumbling-blocks he must run over, in vouchsafing influences, even to the best ?

“ The current hath just broke down yonder dam, “ and rusheth forth with unusual force.” Lord, how often, when, by legal vows and endeavours, I have tried to dam up my corruption ; or, when thou hast dammed them up by conviction and trouble, have they furiously broke through every restraint, and with unusual violence rushed into sinful practices ! Such restraints may, for a while, change the visible channel of sin in my outward life, but can never check the overflowing power of it in my heart. But when, by unbelief, spiritual deadness, carnal anxiety, idolizing of frames, going about to establish self-righteousness, or by some conscience-wasting sin, I had dammed up the current of divine influence from my soul, how often hath God made mountains his way, and broken through hills of provocation, in love to my soul ! how often, when sin abounded, did grace much more abound ! how often, in the height of my wickedness, hath he prevented me with the blessing of goodness ! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me ; be not forgetful of all his benefits.

“ At length I have got to this village.—Here two “ persons make an exchange ; and, no doubt, he “ whose merchandize is worst must make it up with “ money.” Thrice blessed exchange, which Jesus makes with me, and offers to every gospel-hearer ! He, the great God, became debtor, that I might be

discharged; became "sin, that I might be made the righteousness of God in him; became poor, that I might be rich." He, to his inexpressible anguish, took upon him my griefs and sorrows, that I might enter into the joy of the Lord. He takes away my filthy garments, and clothes me with change of raiment. I give him a heart "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" he gives me a new heart, and a new spirit; I give him vanity, weakness, vileness, and woe; and he gives me substance, strength, purity, and happiness.—O happy, happy exchange! grace, grace unto it!

"Within yonder house I see a burning fiery furnace." O would the mighty Angel, by his promises and ordinances, take a live coal from the altar of a Redeemer as crucified for me; cast it into my heart, that mine iniquity may be purged away, and my soul kindled into an everlasting flame, a furnace of love to him!

"Here the scholars are dismissed:—how gladly "they come forth? how foolishly they leap? how "unreasonably they quarrel!" I fear they have no apprehension that they were born children of disobedience and wrath, and that they must quickly die, be judged, and carried to heaven or hell. Alas! do not most professed Christians so come from public ordinances? How gladly are they dismissed from the galling yoke of a searching sermon? how carnally do their heart and tongue leap in their return home? how readily they fall into a trifling dispute, which perhaps they understand not? how void their heart of every serious and eternal view?—How many top professors live, as if religion lay in unconcern about

things invisible ! in attention to ecclesiastic contests, and outward circumstances, and no more ! What avails all learning, if we learn not Christ ; and all profession, if we put not on Christ ! “ Here a boy, “ perhaps falsely, chargeth his fellow with theft.” Slander is a debt which the world reckons she oweth to merit ; and often she is too careful to pay it.— But, alas ! how many, called christians, really defraud parents, masters, and neighbours ! how often are they saints in the church ; but the worst of relations, devils at home, and thieves in the market !— My soul, if I name the name of Christ, let me depart from iniquity ; and if men will reproach me, let me take care to live so, as no one may believe them. “ Here some of them leap over a pit : alas ! one hath “ leapt in !” What multitudes, by faint attempts to self-righteousness, think to leap over the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, but at first leap in, go down to hell with a lie in their right hand ! “ Yonder “ one climbs a tree, draws up himself by one bough “ after another : all this labour is perhaps for a flown “ bird’s nest.” What odd pushes do many make in the world, to get into stations they are not fit for ; and at last meet with a disappointment or cross ! Lord, let me climb towards heavenly things, by taking hold of one promise after another. Disappointment here shall never be my lot : “ the expectation of the poor shall not perish.”

“ Here a crowd sport themselves with I know not “ what.” Alas ! amusement reigns man’s great demand ! To trifle is to live !—Is it a trifle to die ? Alas, how often professed diversions present us with a shroud, and talk of death ! how often are tombs ran-

sacked, and sleeping heroes, for pastime, brought upon the stage! how mad, for pastime, to condemn an awful God! twice on a day to feel an earthquake, and attend a ball! Have men their hours all numbered, all in charge, to rust in sloth, to waste in luxury, or to sport in play!—to waste in stews, where order, ties, relations, laws, are made the droll's laugh; and broken for lustful modes of sin! or where the drunken club, like herds of swine, sit wallowing near the bowl, and talk grunting o'er their troughs! or where the thoughtless sops keep their stainful plays; their games profane; their wanton balls; their night masquerades, their jubilees of hell! where, where is that avarice of time, which death should inspire, as rumoured robberies do endear our gold! how few to think on God, steals a few precious moments from the black, broad waste of murdered time! My soul, let me never forgive thee the loss inestimable of my twelve years of life. "Here a sorry fellow, with "his pipe, decoys the youth after him." Lord, how often, how obstinately do we refuse to be charmed by the gospel-invitations, though thou charm never so wisely! but if Satan, with the most empty temptation, if a false teacher, a puppet-shewer, or stage-player, with any novelty, call us, how do we crowd after them!

"Here stands the hooper; just now he set up "the staves of his vessel, and was ready to drive the "hoops; but a small unwary touch hath demolished, "hath displaced all." How often, when by manifold divine influence, and by much pains, I have got my heart into a frame, hath the slightest touch of temptation transformed me into a mass of deadness,

darkness, and disorder ! How often, when by self-examination, I have got my spiritual state and case pretty clearly stated, have I been, all of a sudden, thrown into the utmost perplexity and confusion ! Scarcely have I said, " My mountain stands strong, I shall never be moved," when my prosperous state hath been turned into misery.

" My late fever, and my drinking of herbal juice, have so sharpened my appetite, that I can travel no further without a refreshment." Lord Jesus, let all my distress and deliverance, every thing which I have, or want, enlarge my desire after thee. If I have many evil, and few good things on earth, let me desire thee to sweeten my cross, and supply my want. If I enjoy manifold comforts, do thou sanctify them, and balance my heart against them : let me enjoy all things in thee, and use all things for thee ; let me value no creature, but as it leads to thee ; and possess all things as partaking of thee ; as effluxes and ebullitions of thee, O fountain of living waters. Is any thing sweet ? my soul, how sweet must God, who made it, be : is any thing good ? it is a taste of infinite goodness : is any thing lovely ? it is the picture of him who is LOVE : is any thing stable and firm ? it is the shadow of him with whom there is no variableness : is any thing strong ? it flows from JEHOVAH, with whom is everlasting strength : doth any thing give rest, ease, or refreshment ? it springs from the bowels of the all-sufficient, the infinite God.

" This inn which I enter is but a sorry one : probably they cannot afford me delicacies." But let me content myself with what they can give, rejoicing

that in Christ there is more than I can ask or think. "Many things in the form and order of this inn need "to be rectified." But why should I rack my wits to spy faults, or devise how to reform that with which I have so small and short-lived a connection? Let not me, like many, be always abroad; reforming other people, and never at home reforming myself. This present world, and my lot therein, are but an inn built on the way to eternity: perhaps in a moment, I must bid it an everlasting adieu. Why then trouble and distract my heart to find fault with it, or to devise how to conform it to my taste? Let me therefore be content with such things as I have; let me reckon every thing good which God giveth, every thing seasonable which he sends: "for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Had I understanding, I should in all things think of, admire, praise, and bless God. To delight myself in God; to rejoice always in him, would be liberty, riches, and kingdoms indeed. The things of this world only make a noise, and cause trouble; her best gifts are but vanity, the mere phantom of a dream. Leave, my soul, these nothings to the low ambition, the sordid pride of kings; let God be thy ALL, and IN ALL. "My entertainment here hath been beyond expectation." Lord, how often have I feared where no fear was! how often hast thou disappointed my sinful jealousy of thy love, and my distrust of thy care! how often hast thou met with my soul, when I scarce expected it! "Farewell, my host." Perhaps we must next meet before the judgment-seat of Christ. My departure hence strikes my soul with an awful apprehension of a speedy exit into eternity.

“Here I pass a fine garden.” Let me with Zacheus, climb up this tree on the outside, and take an instructive view of her contents: to what purpose serve my eyes, but to see the glories of Godhead inscribed on herbs, on flowers, on trees, on stars, and every creature? “How high its surrounding wall!” Not half so high nor strong, as JEHOVAH, who is a wall of fire round about his people: not half so comely, or useful, as the wall of salvation, which protects the garden of the church from thievish men, devilish foxes, and every hurtful blast: not half so regular as the wall of government and discipline divinely erected about the church: Lord, let me never concur with the demolishers hereof; for if it be destroyed, the plants and fruits must be exposed to ruin. “This large garden hath but one door.” There is but “one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus:” he is the only true door of access to the garden of God, whether in the militant or triumphant church.

“Yonder are scions newly grafted, and herbs newly planted.” Thrice happy that soul which is cut off from the first Adam, that dead and poisonous root, and grafted into and united with Jesus Christ, by a true and lively faith, and is planted in the likeness of his death, rooted and grounded in him! “What medicinal herbs, as sage, camomile, &c. are here!” All of them emblems of the glorious Plant of Renown, which healeth all manner of diseases.

“How richly these trees blossom and bud! but perhaps a frost, a wind, a multitude of vermin, may quickly render them bare.” Alas! what if a careless heart, a blasting temptation, prevailing

swarms of inward lusts, strip me of all my early blossoms of piety! What if they go up as dust and ruin, and be rottenness! what if I, like many, resemble a saint in youth, and a devil in old age! Lord, never turn away from me to do me good, and I will never turn away from thee. "The trees on the wall blossom best:" and the closer I cleave to Christ, the more I flourish in grace and good works. "How critical for the fruit is the season of blossoms"—And is not our salvation at an important crisis in the days of youth; in the day when God begins to deal with us? If these are not carefully improved, how ready is he to give us up to our hearts' lust, that we may proceed from evil to worse! "Yonder lies a tree newly cut up by the roots; the garden-er's patience could no longer bear with its barrenness." Now, my soul, the axe is laid to the root of the tree with me! If I improve not this gospel opportunity which I now enjoy, quickly shall divine judgments cut me off. O the stupendous patience of God! thrice four years he came seeking fruit and found none: and what am I, even now, but a barren cumberer of his ground! yet no stroke of wrath hath cut me off; nay, God hath promised to make my barren heart to blossom and bring forth fruit abundantly. Lord, do as thou hast said; for how grievous, how shameful, to see all things flourishing but myself! "Yonder, in the midst of the garden, stands a tree without blossoms." Alas, how many sinners grow up amidst gospel-ordinances without the least shadow of true godliness! they are rather baptised beasts and infidels, than Christians; if mercy prevent not, their end is to be burned with un-

quenchable fire. Resolve, my soul, that though my outward lot be barren and empty ; though " the fig tree should not blossom, and the labour of the olive should fail, yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will be very joyful in the God of my salvation." How yonder ivy clasps about the elm ! the woodbine and " jessamine, though weak in themselves, climb up " the supporting wall." Let me be truly planted in Christ ; and being in him, conscious of guilt and weakness, lean upon him as my " righteousness and strength, go up from the wilderness of this world, leaning upon my beloved. Cursed is he that trusteth in man, that maketh flesh his arm, whose heart departeth from the living God."

" Yonder stand the flowery nations : the fragrant " rose begins to blow ; the fruitful, lovely lily rears " her hanging head." Thrice more comely, fruitful, fragrant, and medicinal is Jesus, my Rose of Sharon and Lily of the Valley. Behold, my soul, how dazzling the brightness of his glory ! how ravishing his smell ! how infallibly he cureth those that pine away in their iniquity ! how he condescends to usward ! [how he bowed his head and gave up the ghost ! and be thou a good savour of Christ to all around thee : learn of him to be blameless, useful, meek, and lowly. " Marvellous passion-flower ! " Can I think of thy yet ungrown charms, without directing my soul from creation, and determining to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified ? God forbid that I should glory save in his cross ; who is, at once, my God, my priest, my sacrifice. " Sweet " carnation ! " Can I think of thee without entertaining my soul with the views of my incarnation flower,

Jesus of Nazareth ! “ Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God made manifest in the flesh ;” God in my nature, obeying, suffering, bleeding, dying, rising, and ascending for me. Is JEHOVAH bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh ? Surely my divine, my exalted kinsman, will not, like the Egyptian butler, forget me in my poverty and imprisonment. O the dignity of human nature, as exalted into personal union with the Son of God ; of human nature, as through him redeemed and married unto God ! Let grovelling wits boast of sinful worms ; my boast, O Christ, shall be of thee ; thrice wondrous ! my brother, my husband, and my God ! “ Yonder the marigold is about to open her bosom “ to her darling sun.” So, my heart, open thyself to Christ, and to none but him. “ Here towers the “ heliotrope ; quickly she will unfold her blossoms “ towards the father of the day, and by night droop “ as a mourner for her absent lord.” So, my soul, follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth ; follow him by faith and love as thy Saviour, thy portion, thy sovereign, and thy last end : let me cleave to him in his person, his offices, his word, his Spirit, his cause, and people ; let the motto of my life be, **LOOKING UNTO JESUS.** In every enjoyment, let me look to his bleeding love, to his giving hand, as the source ; in every tribulation, let me look to him as my comfort ; in every infirmity, as my merciful High-priest ; in every prayer, as my prevailing Advocate ; in every moment of life, as my strength and pattern ; in death, as my Saviour, support, and home : when he hides, let me go mourning as without the sun : let it be as a sword within my bones, while any say unto me,

Where is thy God? "Yonder is a hot-bed, which
"dares not risk the cooling breezes of the spring."
Hath ever God warmed my heart with his love? let
me fear sin, avoid the most distant temptation, and
shun every appearance of evil.

"How odoriferous the smell of this garden!"
But not such to my soul as the savour of JEHOVAH's
word, which is a garden, a field the Lord hath blessed.
Let me turn aside from all natural science, all created
objects, to view this: or, lift up thine eyes, my soul,
to the famed garden of God, eternal in the heavens.
There no southern blast of trouble, no east, no south-
west wind of temptation shall infest us: salvation
will God appoint for fences, and for walls, and for
bulwarks. There the revived plants of the Lord, the
trees of righteousness, shall for ever blossom, and
bear ripe fruit; none shall be withered or barren
among them. Ye ransomed, how shall our graces for
ever bud with unpolluted praise! Jesus, thou fruit of
the earth, Plant of Renown, in what ravishing ex-
cellency and comeliness shalt thou for ever appear to
them that are escaped! O our transporting happi-
ness, to see thee as thou art, and behold the glory
which the Father hath given thee! O our overflow-
ing rivers of pleasure at thy right hand for evermore!
"My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God;
when shall I come and appear before God? when
shall I immediately behold thy face in righteousness,
and be satisfied with thy likeness?"—O to be lost in
good supreme—to see and call the rich unfathom-
able mines of God my own—to rise in science as in
bliss—to read creation, to read redemption's mighty
plan in the bare bosom of Godhead—all clouds, all

shadows blown aside, no mystery left, but love divine!

"Now I must shut up my views of this garden, "and proceed on my journey." Alas, how short-lived are our present views of heavenly things! Here we have no continuing city; are not so much as allowed to build tabernacles. We but touch our sweet pleasures, and they die: scarce we bid the visits, the visions welcome, when they bid us adieu. Lord, when we must descend from Pisgah, to labour in a low carnal world, go thou down with us: while it employs my eyes and hands, let it never captivate my heart; amidst all its hurry, let her often spring away a thought to thee. How often, in thy worship, hath the world so attracted my soul, that I scarce knew what I said or heard! O to have the tables turned; and, in the hurry of outward labour, to have my heart so drawn to God, so ravished with redeeming love, as scarce to mind what my hands are about! So, Lord, avenge thyself on this vain world, which has robbed so much of my heart from thee!

"There, by the way side, lies a posy of once "beautiful, but now withered flowers—while in its "freshness, perhaps it was immoderately smelled and "handled, and now it is cast away as useless." Too much familiarity with created things begets contempt of them: our idolizing them either gives a sudden surfeit, or provokes the Lord to blast or remove them. How vain to attempt the pleasing of this world! notwithstanding our utmost complaisance, it will quickly cast us by, to wither in the grave, or burn in hell.

"What a crowd of bowlers play on this green!"

Let me look on a little. Spectators chiefly enjoy the sight, and risk nothing. Lord, while others affect to be bustling gamesters, let me look on, or rather look up. So shall I, at the expence of others, learn the vanity and bitterness of earthly things; and, by setting my affections on things above, shall win all for my glorious prize. "But why do these players advise their bowls how to run or lie? can any thing be more foolish?" And yet not more foolish and far less wicked, than my fretting at, and giving directive wishes to the divine, the unerring course of providence. "Surprising! he that guided this bowl blames it, not himself, for his wrong hit." Alas, my soul, how ready art thou to charge thy faults upon others, and even upon God himself! "What an advantage is it for that unskilful player, that he hath a skilful companion to give him ground!" May Jesus, the Wonderful Counsellor, always give me ground, and advice in all my motions; so shall I hit the mark of the high calling of God in him. "How often the best directed bowls meet with rubs in their way! these that lie short of the mark, prove stumbling blocks to others." Expecting manifold temptations, let me set off with full force towards Jesus Christ, and the heavenly mansions; that nothing may be able to stop or jumble me out of my way. Let me never stop short of this blessed mark, lest I lose what I have wrought; and, by stumbling others, cause them to come short of the glory of God. "Yonder bowl has forcibly struck home his fellow to the mark, and turned off himself." Lord Jesus, let mighty strokes of power, or pressure, strike me home to thyself, even to thy seat; but forbid that

I should be the means of striking home others, and never touch thee myself. Tremble, my soul, lest, after instructing others, I myself should be cast away. "That the bowls may run right, the ground has been levelled, and the grass cut short." How hard is it to move towards the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus! Through manifold variations of lot, or through rank, and abundant outward pleasures and enjoyments, Lord, lead me in a plain path; and, because I am weak, and apt to wander, make thy way straight before my face; lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil. "Here one far gone in a consumption, lies to divert himself with the sight of the game." Poor soul, his closet is fitter for him than a bowling-green; prayer more proper than diversion; but most men will die as they live; they will never be serious till the flames of Tophet make them so.

"Now the sun is quite overclouded." Alas, my God is overclouded! Vile, careless, carnal heart, how hast thou banished him from my sight! what lengths of distance lie between me and him! what clouds, what hills of guilt! Ah, how crimes have blotted my conscience! how they flush crimson confusion into my face! I blush, and am ashamed, to lift up my face unto God. How my conscience starts with terror! how my heart-strings grow with deep complaint! how my flesh lies panting for the Lord! how mute with concealed distress! how forsaken by care's cheerer, Hope! how long joy-widowed! an hour is an age without his smile. What is lightless day without his beams! what is lifeless life without his quickening grace! when he absents, what fills

my soul ; what but rank envy's gall, the leprous spot of pride, dropsied ambition, mad pleasure's feverish heat, and the soul's consumptive thirst of earthly bliss !—Alas, while my soul burnt with desire to see him again, what troops of rivals tempt me off before his face ! what new crowds of vanities and lusts, do I, with grief and wonder, see between him and my soul ! Oh, mad foolish heart, to leave thy God, to chase a shadow ! O fickle, false breast, to entertain, to be fond of every guest, rather than thy God ! Lord, pity a soul that would fain be thine. O arrest, prison me round in thy embrace. O let thy power, thy love, confine my thoughts, my love to thee. My soul, I charge thee to wait on the Lord, that hideth his face, and to look for him. “Here runs a beautiful stream.” Thrice more beautiful river of Jesus' blood, and blessed Spirit, which makes glad the church, the city of God ! O the plenty, the purity, freeness, and easy access to thee ! here we may drink and wash ; all may drink and wash : filthiness can never pollute thy stream. Wash here, my soul ; wash seven times and be clean.

“What numbers fish in this river !” Lord, how great is thy goodness ! at thy command both earth and sea prepare us food ; and, when the one proves churlish, the other often gives with a more liberal hand. “Here is a net drawn, which hath caught nothing.” Alas, how often do ministers cast the gospel-net among multitudes, and yet draw none to Christ ! Alas, how many casts of the net have I sinfully shifted ! “But here comes a net full of fishes, small and great.” O the sovereignty of God, in the conversion of men ; he quickens and gathers

whom, and when, and by whom he will. O when the day of Jesus' power comes, how easy, pleasant, and successful is minister's work ! When he draws, how cheerfully we run after him ! but, alas, that Satan's net is so often full, and Christ's empty ! "Here others fish with bait." With bait of divine love didst thou, Lord, catch me ; and with loving-kindness hast thou drawn me. Redeeming love was line, was hook, was bait. But, ah, how often has Satan caught me, caught multitudes, with baits of sinful or carnal pleasure, profit, or honour ! sad gain, which entails everlasting ruin ! "What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? and what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ?" "How greedily some fishes catch at the bait ; while others only look at it, and start back !" Greedily may I swallow down, and apply Jesus' love to my heart ; but, at the first sight, start, back, my soul, at Satan's baits. Never choose "the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season. Love not the world, nor the things of the world ; for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him ; for all that is in the world is but the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." But, Lord, how often have I greedily seized Satan's baits ; his most cursed, his most insignificant baits ; and no more than vainly gazed at, and wickedly started back from thine ! how simply these "fish swallow the bait without observing the hook !" Too just emblem of my folly, my stupidity ! How often do I swallow sinful baits, without considering the consequence. O that I were wise ; that I understood this ; that I would consider my latter end !

"But when the fishes have bitten, why do not the anglers immediately draw them out? It is to give them line, that they may swallow the hook into their belly, and so be more certainly caught." How craftily hath Satan, times without number, given me line; seemed to cease from me, go out of me, and given me my will, till I had swallowed his hooks, and pierced myself through with many sorrows! Alas, how many of them are within me, which will inwardly rend and tear my soul while I live. What a miracle is it that I live! what more than a miracle is it, that after all, not Satan, but Jesus, has caught me! What a mercy is it, that death hastens to dissolve my frame, that I may be perfectly freed from all the hooks of hell, all my corruptions, and the consequences thereof! "How yonder eel, in labouring to free herself, hath so warped the line about her, that it is scarcely possible to disentangle her." And how often have I by sinful tossings, and irregular attempts to get out of trouble, so entangled myself in it, that God alone can conceive how I could be delivered! Oh! if, in consequence of my having received the heart-cultivating word of his grace, God would enable me so to wrap his promises about all the powers of my soul, that neither sin, nor hell, nor earth, may be able to disentangle them! "Some fish simply bite at the very likeness of a fly; others barbarously catch at the flesh of their own tribe." What multitudes doth Satan catch with the most empty shadows! and if he ensnare us, he regards not how despicable the means be. How many feed upon their neighbour's flesh, rejoice in his affliction, employ their tongues to tear his character, and their

heart and hands to ruin his property!—Ah! that like the fishes of the sea, we should be easily snared in an evil net; and yet voracious devourers of our fellows! “What multitudes of baited lines are in this part of the stream!” What multitudes of fishers hath Satan every where! how numerous are his temptations in every place, every circumstance, and for every person! how astonishing his diligence, his destructive!—How often he makes use of the meanest things, or the best things, to catch and ruin men! Jesus Christ is made a stumbling block, a savour of death, and his grace an occasion of lasciviousness. “But they chiefly fish in troubled waters, where the line is least seen.” So Jesus often causeth us to pass under the rod, to bring us into the bond of his covenant. And in a day of desertion, perplexity, ignorance, and confusion, Satan chiefly lays snares for our soul. “Straws and feathers skim along the surface of this river; while gold, or jewels, would sink to the bottom.” Let trifling thoughts, let carnal cares have small impression on, scanty residence in, my heart and life: but let the golden Saviour, the weightier, the eternal things, sink her whole depth, and rest within. “Full heaven, and but a narrow brink of earth, is painted by reflection in this stream. Scanty be the share of earthly concerns in my heart and life: but let wide, wide views of heaven, be figured, be deep engraven in my soul, and reflected in my life. “How quickly yonder foam dieth away into the peaceful liquid!” So may the foam of my discontent, my angry passion, subside into the calmest resignation, the most peaceable patience, and a cheerful smile. “How

“restlessly this current pusheth his way to the ocean !
 “No bars, no rocks, no straits, stop his course : no
 “flowery banks tempt him aside from his channel.”
 With patience and resolution, push forward, my
 soul, to thy true centre, thy great ocean, God. Let
 no opposing temptation, no straitening trouble, stop
 thy way ; let no flowery bank of created enjoyments
 decoy thee from thy proper course. “ At once the
 “ocean feeds this river’s springs, and receives his
 “watery tribute.” And is not inexhausted Godhead
 the source of all my bliss ? the final mark of all my
 praise ? my great beginning, my middle, my end,
 my ALL ?

“ Let me ascend this sloping hill.” How like the
 Christian path ; a sweetly pleasant, but laborious
 way. “ Around I gaze on flowery regions, on pros-
 “pects fair.—All below appears a picture ; a divine
 “carpet spread below my feet ; and nought is above
 “but skies.” Get down, ye gilded dust, let nothing
 be above my soul, but my heaven, my Saviour, and
 my God : yet in creation search, my thoughts, still
 search for your beloved : he is all showed, all near,
 all present, yet unseen. If he pours into matter such
 fulness to gratify our five-fold sense ; if he so royally
 furnish this earthly prison, this lodging of his mean-
 est servants, what must be the glories of his pre-
 sence-chamber ! Rather, if these faint copies are so
 glorious, what must be their source, their fair ori-
 ginal of unbounded goodness, essential glory, and
 excellency !—But am I priest for this mute creation ?
 what thousands on every hand urge me to offer quick
 their sacrifices of praise to their Maker !—Am I his
 son, his friend ? let me survey the earth, as the king-

dom of my Father, where he meets me in every view, in retirements, and shades, till I ripen for the open glories of my coronation-day.

“From yonder cloud the thunder roars.” In vain should I hope to hide myself from it below these ruinous walls : more vainly should I attempt to secure myself from the incensed judge, from the omnipotence of wrath, by a shadowy profession, and ruinous self-righteousness. “How terrible is this “clap!” How tremendous is JEHOVAH’s frown ! how severe, though but the frown of love !—It is my Father’s thunder ; himself is here ; my help is returned ; he is come ; he is come ; fear’s check, pain’s balm, the healing visitant, the sympathizing friend ! After long absence, how divinely sweet is his return felt ! Let nature be seized with her expiring pangs ; let hell arm her furies ; roar on ye thunders ; ye lightnings flash ; my untrembling breast is composed to peace, is sweetly calmed ; is quite assured with the felt pledges of a Saviour’s love. “Thunderstruck “now falls yon stately oak.” O the danger of the proud, the great ! how often God casts abroad the rage of his wrath, and abases them !

“The thunder ceased, the fields unusual brightness wear.” After what awful terrors has my comfort abounded ! When Jesus found me in my blood, stained through with every spot of hell ; when he found me trembling and condemned, in my own thoughts undone, and washed me in his bleeding love, how his softening Spirit melted my inward rock ! how, with all my guilt, with all my fears, to him I turned, and felt him soon my peace, my joy ! how I feel him still a quickening head to me, his meanest

member; his weak foot defiled! how am I pleased in him! how fixed, how safe; not in my hold of him, but in his of me. Why should I pine for earth? why languish for the shadow of a world? why envy others their share of vanity and vexation of spirit? What is pleasure, but a foam raised up by our rapid sense? what is diversion, but the froth of a vain world? what is beauty but an outward toy, worn for the sake of others? what is wealth, but the sanctuary of base guilt? what is fame, but an empty breath on other's lips? what is learning, but a hard gained boast of knowing what was known before?

“But being weak and wearied with my journey, “I must rest awhile on this eminence.” Hail, hail, my soul, there remaineth a rest for the people of God: there remains an eternal rest for me. When weary and heavy laden with guilt and corruption, Jesus hath called me; hath given and promised rest unto my soul. He hath given me rest in his covenant, in his blood, in his power, and in his love; and promised me rest for ever on his throne. This is my rest, my refreshing; here will I stay: for I do like it well. But while my body sits on this heap, let my soul fly aloft, and admire the Giver, the means of her rest. Was HE, who made archangels, sent forth in the likeness of sinful flesh for me, that I might become like the angels in heaven; might for ever sit with thrones and dominions, for ever vie with them in songs of praise? Did HE, that stretched out the heavens; HE, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, lie in a womb, in a stable, in a manger, in a grave, for me, that I might have a house eternal in the heavens; that the Most High

might be my everlasting habitation? Did the essential brightness of the Father's glory; **HE**, who made the shining stars; **HE**, who decked the sky with these bright oceans of flame, lie concealed in despicable Nazareth, lie contemned on earth, that he might plant the heavens with new stars, of men redeemed, and even with wretched me? Did *he*, who gilt the dazzling sun, give his blessed face to shame and spitting, that I might for ever shine as the sun in the firmament of his Father? Did *he*, who decked the changing moon, bright empress of the night, put on our robes of clay, of guilt, and dip his vesture in his sacred blood, that my Sun of Righteousness might no more go down; and that my moon of subjective grace and happiness, might no more withdraw her shining? Did *he*, who launched the wandering planet, appear on earth as a restless fugitive, that he might seek and find a lost, a wandering wretch, and fix me in eternal bliss? Did *he*, who with unerring hands, moves and guides the flaming ponderous comet, whose shock is nature's wreck, bear such fiery, such confounding shocks of woe, that I might be delivered from endless, from almighty shocks of divine ire; and from the horrid tempest of the unruly, jarring passions of my heart? Did **GOD**, who tunes the thunder's awful roar, weep, sigh, groan, roar, and die for me, that my endless anguish, and infernal roaring, might be changed into notes of everlasting praise? Did *he*, who casts abroad the rage of his wrath, in lightning's fierce destructive flame, kindly submit to all his Father's wrath, all his enemies' rage, that he might obtain forgiveness, everlasting peace, and life for me? Did *he*, who

made the scowling pregnant clouds, pour out his prayers, his tears, his blood, his soul, for me, that unseen skies might pour down righteousness, and the opened windows of heaven for ever reign salvation upon me? Did *he*, who rules the stormy tempest, endure the winter-blasts of boundless wrath for me, that I might enter into boundless calms of peace, and stormless mansions of felicity? Did *he*, who arms the baleful pestilence, submit himself to all the shame, to all the pains of death, that he might be the plague of death, the destruction of the grave for me? Did the Creator of all the ends of the earth, who fainteth not, neither is weary, labour under the load of my guilt, my griefs and sorrows; and, being weary, sit thus on Jacob's well, lie in a garden, and in a grave, for me; that my soul, my flesh, might rest in hope; that I might for ever rest in JEHOVAH's bosom, be eternally loaded with his benefits, and have all my earthly weariness working for me an exceeding and eternal weight of glory? Did *he*, who weighs the mountains in scales, sink beneath our loads of woe, to heave the more than mountainous burden from a guilty world? Did *he*, who made the spacious deep, sink in deep waters, where there was no standing; drink oceans of divine fury, that I, the rightful heir of endless woe, might eternally swim in oceans of redeeming love, and quaff rivers of unmixed and immortal bliss? Did *he*, whose is the heavens, the earth, the sea, and the fulness thereof, become poor, that I through his poverty might become rich, filled with all the fulness of God? what melting, what stupendous truths are these!

Creation, liberal of comforts to guilty, worthless

me,—to me, why withhold them from thy great, thy rightful Lord? Bethlehem, why not allow him a chamber for his birth, a cradle for his bed? Canaan, why deny thy holy child Jesus, the innocent, the heavenly babe, a peaceful residence? City of God, why refuse him an habitation? Ye fertile fields, why suffer him to be hungry? Ye rivers, ye fountains of water, which allow wild asses to drink their fill, why refuse to quench his thirst? Ye houses, ye chambers, why deny him a where to lay his head? Ye cattle, which feed on a thousand hills, why all your tribes, but one dull ass, refuse to grace his solemn triumph? Ye unexhausted mines of gold and silver, why allow but the rate of a slave for his goodly price? Judas, why betray thy friend? Peter, why with curses deny thy God, thy Saviour? Ye disciples, why forsake your kind, your adored Master? Ye priests, rulers, Gentiles, and people of Israel, why reproach, condemn, and crucify your Maker? Ye angels, who slew the Assyrian host, who delivered Lot from the overthrow, why, as idle spectators, look on your suffering Lord? Almighty Father, why desert the Son of thy love? thy only begotten Son? why so far from his roaring? why exhaust thy flaming fury upon him in whom thy soul delighteth? Why does my fancy rove?—Ah!—my sins did all!—for ever shamed, loathed, cursed, and confounded let them be.—And O for ever prized, loved, admired, adored, and blessed, let Jesus be. I am lost in wonder and inflamed with love. Had I ten thousand souls, my Lord, I give them all away in love to thee.

“But I must now rise, and proceed on my journey.” And may not I, with the patriarch, cheer-

fully lift up my feet to walk, and my heart to rejoice ; for the day of my redemption draweth nigh ? Let me call this spot Bethel. To me it hath been the house of God, and gate of heaven : I have seen God face to face, in the person of his Son, the Man who is his fellow, and am preserved. O children, come hither, taste and see that the Lord is good. "Now I am come into a very desert place." But I am not alone, for the Father is with me ; he will never leave me nor forsake me ; let me improve his presence, walk before him, and be perfect ; let me never be less alone, than when sequester from the world : let Jesus converse with me, and let his comforts delight my soul. Ye troops of angels, by faith I discern your presence : may I walk in your company, as with wise spirits, that can judge what I do or say ; may I walk as with holy ones, that hate every false and wicked way.

"Yonder is a burying place." Her retired situation suggests her solemn language : let me turn aside and converse awhile with the dead : let me be previously acquainted with my future companions. O what a volume of divine sense is the grave ! dust and ashes loudly preach man's infinite concern. Here lieth the infant, hurried from the belly to this dark vault of death.—Yonder lieth another, cut off in the bloom of youth.—Here is a young man who died in his prime.—Yonder lieth one that departed in the noon-tide of life, and in the fulness of his strength, amidst the hurry of his business, and the flow of his wealth.—Here lieth the kind husband, the laborious parent, who supported his numerous family by the toil of his hands, and now hath left them destitute.—

Yonder is interred the man of grey hairs, who a thousand times resolved reformation, and at eighty died in his wickedness.—Here lieth the fine lady ; the rich, the learned, the great, the honourable. False marble, where? O madness! is there state in death? mockery too severe for my worst foe! deep proof of pride in man: nothing but scattered ashes, nothing but wasted spoils of old mortality, nothing but sordid dust and noisome vermin, lie here. How many graves here hold my younger? with what solemn awe every grave addresseth me—make haste, and come away!—Relentless, iron-hearted death; carest thou not for the persons or concerns of any? Keepest thou no stated time? Let me then be always ready to receive thy stroke: let Jesus, who died for his murderers, Jesus thy plague, thy death, be mine; let him ever stand at my right hand, that I may not be moved; then at thy pleasure strike; with gladness I kiss thy rod; O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? “In these graves nature is hushed; proud disturbers make no more noise.” Be still, my soul, and know that the Lord is God: when I tread on dust, once honoured dust, let me tread my pride, my youthful vanity, and the moon of this world under my feet. But think, my heart, with what solemnity shall these dead, at the latter day, arise, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting shame and contempt.

“With no small difficulty, I am at last come to my friend’s house, and the salutation is over.” Who knows how suddenly I must go to my long home, to my Friend Jesus’ mansions? how quickly angels, nay, divine persons, shall welcome me to my everlasting abode? Lord, hasten it in its time.

"In yonder corner, the suspended spider, from her bowels, spins and weaves her web of vanity and mischief: already the unwary fly is entangled to her ruin." Ye sons of men, what is our righteousness, but a spider's web? It may entangle and ruin us, as yonder fly; but can nowise recommend us to the favour of God. Count, therefore, my soul, all things but loss and dung to win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is by the faith of Jesus Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. "But the venomous spider taketh hold with her hand, and is in king's palaces." So let me, a worthless worm, an envenomed sinner, by the hand of faith, take hold of the new covenant, that I may dwell for ever in the palace of King Jesus; and even now thrust myself into the most intimate fellowship with him: let me in no wise consent to be cast out.

"The fever threatens to return upon me; my flesh warms; my breath shortens; my pulse beats high." Good is the will of the Lord; for I know, that in love and faithfulness he will afflict me; but let me praise him for so timing my trouble; for preventing it while I was in the desert, where no man was to care for my soul; and now let my faith in Jesus beat high; let my heart warm with love, burn with desire, and break with breathing hard after him. O to have his love shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost, to inflame and sicken my soul with love to him that loved me, and gave himself for me!

"Call a physician." But first call Jesus the Physician of value, the Lord my God, that healeth me:

pray for me; if you find my beloved, tell him that the worthless he, whom he loveth, is sick of a fever, and sick of love. Happy am I, seemingly dying amidst such as fear God, and have communion with him. Rather would I die among wild beasts than among carnal men, who but harden and defile their departing friend, by unconcerned looks, carnal converse, and destructive flattery. Ah, companions only fit for dying brutes!

Physicians, do not dissuade me from thoughts of death: advise not my friends to conceal from me their fears of my approaching dissolution. Moses, the man of God, the adept of knowledge human and divine, and Israel's mighty sovereign, the man according to God's heart, prayed for solid views of death. Israel's God represents the consideration of death as the school, the sum of true wisdom: dare you then represent it as hurtful? Is it for any to venture on a blind leap into eternity; to leap into heaven or hell by guess?

"My life is doubtful." Alas,—so now is the salvation of my soul; now the sweet promises which once refreshed me, are to my heart as a barren wilderness and a land of drought: innumerable and fearful challenges oppress my conscience; guilt racks my waking heart, and frights my slumbering eyes: the iniquities of my youth muster themselves in array against me: with horror I behold my whole life filled with vanity and wickedness: overlook sins of youth as trifles who will, now, in the jaws of death, they appear to me sins, STINGING SINS, indeed. Satan fearfully tempts and assaults me; God hides himself from me, and frowns upon me; while I suf-

for his terrors, I am fearfully distracted; my hopes of future happiness are torn up by the roots; I apprehend God- is swearing that I shall never enter into his rest, and that since I am filthy, I shall be filthy still. Lord, stop this awful oath; swear not against me in thy wrath. Hast thou not sworn, that thou hast no pleasure in the death of him that dieth? Is thy mercy clean gone? wilt thou be favourable no more? doth thy promise, thy promise spoken to me at * * * *, fail for ever more? hast thou in anger shut up all thy tender mercies? Ah, thrice dreadful thought!—how my soul shudders with horror at the view of an immediate appearance before God!—O how shall I shift death, how shall I escape the damnation of hell?

But, Lord, art not thou able to save to the uttermost? Where can thy uttermost be?—Oh sweet word, able to save to the uttermost! and was it inserted for me, who has sinned to the uttermost? Lord Jesus, I lay myself down at thy feet a sinner to the uttermost, needing and begging a salvation to the uttermost; and if I perish, I perish; I will die here:—all in ropes of guilt and cords of iniquity, I prostrate myself before thee: “My heart fainteth for thy salvation; but I hope in thy word.” Necessity makes me hope, for to whom else can I go? “Thou alone hast the words of eternal life.” Lord, I cannot bear the thoughts of being for ever condemned to curse the God of my life; to be eternally an outrageous hater of Christ, and an endless prey of lusts. O receive a poor sinner that cannot, and WILL NOT shift without thee!

Is this thy voice? "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him; I hid me, and was wroth; and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and I will heal him: I will lead him also; and I will restore comforts to him, and to his mourners." Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. But what if Satan, to deceive me, hath suggested this promise: "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant." Lord, save me from delusion on the very porch of eternity!—As thy word I take it. Oh shew me, whether a promise injected by Satan could so abase me and my righteousness to the very dust; could so warm my heart with desire towards thee." Thou that knowest what is in man, search me, and try me; discover plainly to me what is my state and case. Suffer me not to hang by the frail, the breaking thread of life, without knowing but next moment I must drop into eternal fire. O confirm thy gracious word; let it more effectually penetrate into my heart.

Lord, how excellent is thy loving-kindness!—While I was yet speaking, thou hast heard.—Now is come salvation and strength.—He is come, the Comforter that relieves my soul. Now—my doubts are solved; my clouds of guilt and fear are scattered, my temptations foiled, my lusts repressed; my heart leaps for joy. Now I hear Jesus powerfully whispering to my heart, "In a little wrath I hid myself from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a plea-

sant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; I surely will have mercy on him, saith the Lord." Now I have found him whom my soul loveth; I hold him, and will not let him go. As a bundle of myrrh, and cluster of camphire, he lies between my breasts; and through his grace I resolve hereafter to trust in him, though he should slay me. O Christian friends, stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please. Now my sick-bed seems softer than down; a paradise indeed! love-sickness to him so overpowers my heart, that I scarce feel the ailment of my body! Now every former visit of his love is confirmed: now my soul is all wonder and all resignation to his will! How I behold the glory of his person, and taste the sweetness of his love? How, Lord, my soul admires, how she bleaseth thee for thine early striving with my conscience, thine early conquest of my heart! O how grace hath reigned and abounded towards me! What profit my diseases have brought—my joy overcomes the pain: my cheerful soul looks through the ruins of her clay: the everlasting hills through every chink appear; the shines of heaven rush sweetly in at all the gaping flaws: had the prison walls of my body been strong and whole, I had less of glory seen; I had less enjoyed the sweet gales, and the fresh air of heaven. O may the ruins wider grow, till my soul escape, and sing, and soar away! Soon may the storms of trouble beat my house of bondage down, and let the prisoner fly! O how sweetly grace elevates me to unusual heights, till I am near his presence come, where floods of glory check my view, and quite entrance my heart! how, by strong-winged faith, and

pains I dread, if he but shew his love ; no curse I fear, Christ was made a curse for me ; no awful issue racks my heart : " Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect ? It is God that justifieth ; who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died ; yea, rather, that is risen again, and is set down at the right hand of God. I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, things present, nor things to come, shall ever be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus my Lord."

" Physicians, are there indeed hopes of my recovery ?" Alas ! will recovery turn up life, my title to more woe, more sin, more distance from my God ! Am I to be shipwrecked into health ! must I a new return from the harbour of everlasting rest, into a stormy sea of corruption, temptation, and trouble !—Ah, must my soul continue paying so dear rent for her ill lodging ! But it is the Lord ; let him do what seemeth him good ; it is enough that my beloved is mine, and I am his. All the heaven I wish below, is to taste his love ; and all the heaven I wish above, is but to see his face. Yet a little, little while, and he that cometh will come, and will not tarry ; though the vision be yet for an appointed time, at the end it shall speak, and shall not lie. Wait for it, because it will surely come, and will not tarry : let me not desert my watch-tower till God call me off. If I die, I shall praise him ; and if I live, through his grace, I shall praise him while I have a being ; I will make known his truth and kindness to the following generation.

" But the fever being abated, I am seized with a flux." What a mass of corruption am I ! How

stupendous is the power of God, in supporting me under this double distemper ! “ Now I am also affected with an inflammation.” Death is certainly in the cup.—Not certainly, my soul ; for in six troubles he can deliver me, and in seven no evil may come near me. But if I recover, my life will certainly be a triple wonder, a threefold escape from death at once. May God give me a triple grace, to live answerably to it. But now lying on the threshold of eternity, a distinguished, and unparalleled debtor to the mercy of God, whether I die or live, I have but one petition to ask, and I hope God will not say me *NAV*,—That all the days of my life, and for ever, I may continually sink deeper in debt to his sovereign grace, dwell in his house, behold his beauty, and inquire reverently in his temple.

THE
CHRISTIAN JOURNAL
OF A
SUMMER DAY.

**"NOW I am awake, and able to rise from my
"bed." Lord, what am I, that thou shouldst have
brought me hitherto! how many thousands are in
eternity! are in hell, since I lay down! how many
thousands seized with trouble, and chained to their
bed! How many this moment feel death, and his vast
variety of pain! How many pine with churlish want!
How many drink the baleful cup of grief, and eat
the bitter bread of misery! How many point the
parting anguish over the dying friend! Am I better
than they? No, in no wise; bless, therefore, the
Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.**

**"But how came I forth from this bed?" Is it as
Tamar did from her brother's chamber, full of guilt
and shame? Have I thereon devised evil, or followed
after vanity? have filthy dreams defiled my flesh? *
have carnal and selfish slumbers polluted my heart?
have I slept to the glory of God? when I awaked,
was I still with him? did I remember him upon my
bed, and meditate on him in the night-watches? did
the spiritual turn of my dreams bear witness, that
the multitude of my business is to hold communion
with God? † "I hope the morning is agreeable."**

* Jude ver. 8.

† Eccl. v. 3.

But is this my happiest? No: "I forget the things which are behind, and reach forth to those which are before," at the resurrection of the just. Thrice happy morning that! By faith, methinks, I already hear the great archangel sounding his trumpet, and saying to my dead body, "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; the winter of death is past, the rain of trouble is over and gone. Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust;" with Christ's dead body shall you arise; your dew shall be as the dew of herbs. With what gladness shall I then arise, and go to Jesus, mine exceeding joy.

"But now I must shift myself, and put on my 'clothes.' Naked came I out of my mother's belly, and naked shall I return thither. Stript of all things, I must quickly descend to the grave. Sin made nakedness shameful and hurtful. Alas, how am I covered with its guilt, and blotted with its stains! O Jesus, wash me in thy blood, that I may be whiter than the snow. "How refreshing to my body are "these clean linens!" But how much more refreshing was it to my soul, when Jesus enabled me to put off the corrupt old man with his deeds, and put on himself, for my righteousness and sanctification; put on his pure righteousness and grace! *—How refreshing, to put off the vile rags of corruption and mortality, and put on the clean garments of perfect holiness, immortality, and endless felicity! †

"Now I am started to my feet." But, my soul, art thou grovelling on the earth? or dost thou stand

* Rev. xix. 8.

† 2 Cor. v. 4.

on the Rock of ages, and tower in desire towards heavenly things? "My eyes are quite opened." But is my understanding opened to understand the scripture, to discern JEHOVAH in his greatness and love; Jesus in his beauty, fulness, and grace; sin in its vileness, self in his baseness, the world in her withering vainness? Know I the Lord my God? "My clothes are put on." What are they but badges of my shame? whence came they? are they not borrowed from the beasts and fields? and is it not a mercy that the borrower is not servant to the lender? O the kindness of God, in stripping innocent fields, guiltless flocks, and harmless vermin, to clothe me, a sinner! O his astonishing kindness, in stripping his dear Son of his glorious apparel, and clothing him with clay, guilt, and condemnation, that I might be made all glorious within, and have my raiment of wrought gold; that I might be arrayed with the silken robe, the full atonement of Jesus, who became a worm, and no man; that I might be decked and warmed with the fleece of the Lamb of God, and adorned with the righteousness of him, my burnt sacrifice! "Natural clothes do not warm me, but merely retain the heat which I communicate to them." But my divine robes truly warm my cold soul with foreign, with celestial fire; wrapt in them by a close application of Jesus, as my righteousness and strength, I can but melt and burn with love to him who loved me, and gave himself for me. His obeying, his dying love, believed with my heart, kindles all her powers into a most vehement flame.

"But I must wash myself in this clean water, to

"refresh, cool, and purify me." My soul, when thy corruptions wax warm ; when the fire of lust begins to kindle ; when thou art wearied with the greatness of thy way ; when thou art scorched with Satan's fiery darts ; when thou art defiled by the flying dust of carnal care, or by falling into the mire of any sinful practice ; bathe thyself in Jesus' blood ; wash thyself in the influences of his Spirit : so shall lusts cool and weaken, thy weariness be removed, thy temptations be foiled, and thy spots purged. Wash thine hands in innocence, and so compass the altar of God. Wash on till thou art without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

"Now let me examine my appearance in this "looking glass." My mirror, flatter me not ; too often have I flattered myself, when I examined my soul by the mirror of God's word. "Showest thou "me a beautiful countenance?" A beautiful body is but a comely prison ; beauty is but vain, but skin-deep, and short-lived ; and favour is deceitful. How quickly will old age, or death, turn my comeliness into corruption ! my beauty into burning ! My beauty is but borrowed from God : let me not worship it in his stead ; let not me, as of the old serpent, have comeliness in my countenance, and pride, corruption, and lust, reigning in my heart. Let my beauty be in the inner man ; beauty that will triumph over death and the grave. If my outward beauty be inferior to that of others, let me be more eminently holy in all manner of conversation. "If "my face be ugly and freckled ;" let it serve for a standing memorial of my more unsightly heart, and spotted life ; let it push me to insure union with

Christ, "who shall change my vile body, and make it like unto his glorious body." "Is my countenance "furrowed with wrinkles, and withered with decay? "are my teeth rotten, or falling out?" These are hints from heaven, that I am near the end of my journey; death approaches near; the furrow of the grave is opening for me; quickly shall I drop into it, and rot under its clods; quickly shall my spirit return to God who gave it. But, my soul, have I seen Jesus to-day? Is it the great business of my life, to behold as in a glass his glory, that I may be changed into his image? Am I standing on the sea of glass, mingled with fire, before his throne? Do I depend on his righteousness, Spirit, and love, in all my dealings, with heaven, earth, and hell?

"Now methinks I am handsomely dressed." But how much precious time, time more precious than kingdoms, have I took to dress a living dunghill, a morsel for worms! How slightly have I looked up to God, to adorn me with his grace, and enable me to adorn his doctrine, and my profession, with a holy conversation, by being in his fear all the day long! How little do I live in putting on the Lord Jesus, and boasting myself in the imputed robes of his righteousness!

"Let me now retire to my closet, and begin the "day with God." Awake, my dull, my drowsy heart; awake, utter a song, praise the Lord for his goodness; for he hath done excellent things, which are known in all the earth. Bless the Lord, O my soul, that I am not awaked in hell, nor surrounded with infernal flame; that I am fresh and vigorous; that I have a competent portion of liberty, honour,

and wealth ; that I have a house to dwell in, bread to eat, and raiment to put on ; that the family are safe and sound ; that I have agreeable friends and neighbours ; and, what is more than all, have God, have Jesus, to be mine. My heart is fixed ; my heart is fixed ; with grace will I sing psalms of praise, in the assured hope that my lips shall for ever pour forth loud hosannas and hallelujahs to God " that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb."

" Let me read his precious word ;" it is the glass by which I am to examine my heart, speech, and behaviour ; it is my guide in the way to glory ; it is my armour to defend myself, and slay my spiritual foes ; it is the food, the sincere milk, on which my soul liveth. Thrice sweet promise ! how exactly suited to my case ! how richly stored ! how pregnant with the goodness of God ! how ravishing to my heart ! Where wast thou during the late circumstances of my soul ! Often I have read thee, but never felt thy power as now. Sweet mystery ! doctrine of God in my nature, loving, undertaking, obeying, dying, rising again, and interceding for me ! it is like honey to my mouth ; it penetrates to the bottom of my heart ; it is " like new wine, going down sweetly." Just commandment of Heaven, how pleasantly dost thou awe my conscience, reprove my sin, direct my path, and sway my will ! Say, could ten thousand years' perusal of plays and romances, afford such pleasure to a soul, as these few lines of inspiration have done to mine ? Can souls immortal feed on fancies ? Surely not ; except to future woe, Ye sons and daughters of pleasure, retire and read your Bibles, to be gay.

(3.)

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"Now I will call on God," and he shall save me. What am I, to be thus admitted into Jehovah's presence, and to enjoy intimate fellowship with him! How am I, who am but dust and ashes, allowed to talk with God, as a man with his friend! while I am yet speaking, he answers, and saith, "I am the Lord thy God." So sweetly his promises crowd in my heart, that cordial AMENS are all the requests I have room to offer. Now, Lord, thou hast given me the spirit of grace and supplication. Now he helpeth mine infirmities, and maketh intercession for me with groanings which cannot be uttered." My heart and flesh cry out for God, the living God. Now I wax bold to ask, without doubting, all that is Christ's; grace, glory, and every good thing; for he is mine, and I am his: God spared not his own Son; and shall he not with him freely give me all things? May prosperity attend his cause among men; let my right hand forget her cunning, if I forget Jesus' honour, Jesus' church, when it is well with me. But O sweet frame, whither art thou fled? why so quickly fled? in the place, in the duty, where God talked with me, he is gone up from me. Alas, what can a soul separated from God do, but languish in disquiet, and be tormented with perpetual agitation? But, blessed Jesus, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;" though frames, though heart and flesh faint and fail, thou shalt never fail me. I shall see thee again, and my heart shall rejoice, and my joy shall no man take from me. Quickly do I hope: to see the time, when God shall hide his face from me no more; when my heart shall be so arrested with the powerful influence of redeeming love, as to

be for ever incapable of wandering, so inflamed as never too cool. My requests being presented to God in the name of his Son, let me leave them before his throne, and daily wait for his gracious answer : let me enforce them by a frequent repetition of them, and carefully observe divine providence, to discern when they are fulfilled ; and so “ understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.”

“ Let me now worship God with my family.” The length of my journey, and the urgent labour of my servants, loudly call us off from it : but dare I prefer the advance of a few paces travelling, or a job of earthly business, to the command, the enjoyment of our God ? Lord forbid, that I should rob thee of time, regard, or service, to bestow it upon a worthless, ungrateful, perishing world. The louder its hurry roar for our attendance, there is the more need to have our soul fully ballasted with thy grace. While it gives us time to eat, drink, or sleep ; let us be ashamed to say, that we have no time for the family to worship God : are our bodies, our belly, dearer to us than our God ? Never let us take a breakfast for these, and deny it to our soul : let never my careless neglect employ the weeping prophet as my chaplain : God forbid that my house should have a concern in his awful prayer, “ Pour out thy fury upon the heathen, that know thee not, and upon the families that call not upon thy name.”

“ Though but lately risen, I am set down to “ breakfast.” But on the earliest bloom of life, did I begin to feed on Jesus’ flesh and blood ? Was he my trust from my mother’s belly ? had I scarce adieu’d her supporting arms, when I began to feast

on his love? "Here is plentiful provision, provision suited to all our appetites." Lord, how rich thy bounty! how astonishing thy kindness, in causing sea and land, places near and distant, concur to furnish this meal for us rebellious sinners! But, friends, is not this entertainment full of Christ, the glorious, the sweet provision, which came down from heaven? Can I partake of pottage, coffee, or chocolate, without lifting up my heart to him, who, as the fruit of the earth, excellent and comely, was roasted in flames, and grinded in the mill of unbounded wrath; that being, as it were, mingled with the full flood of everlasting love, with the spirit of all grace, he might be delicate provision for me! Can I drink this far-brought tea, without enrapturing thoughts of the labour, the expense of Heaven, in preparing and bringing Jesus near, to undertake for me; to obey, and die for me; dwell in, and for ever feed me! "How marvellous the art and labour which prepared this sweetening sugar!" Thrice more marvellous the art, the love, the labour, which fitted all-sweetening Jesus, and his all-sweetening redemption for me! and, blessed be God, their price cannot be raised! "How rich and pure this milk!" But far more rich, pleasant, nourishing and restoring, the sincere milk of God's word. May I desire and feed on it, that I may grow thereby. "How sweet this butter of kine, and honey of bees!" Far sweeter is JEHOVAH's promise to my heart: Jesus, by conveying all things through himself, and his new covenant, hath made them brooks of honey and butter to my soul. "How excellent this bread, that strengtheneth our heart!" Thrice more excellent

art thou, my blessed and bruised Redeemer, in all the earth! evermore give thou, be thou the bread which supports my soul, my unfailing staff of bread, and whole stay of water. With pleasure may I ever apply thy person, thy offices, thy relations, and works, that my soul may be strengthened and excited to every good work and deed. But if this small table, this single meal contain so much, what must be in God himself? how rich my endless entertainment, when filled with all the fulness of God!

“Let me now take my horse, and ride my journey.” What am I, to have a horse, which many, and even Jesus, wanted! to have both a horse to ride on, and legs fit to walk with; while some have neither! But “to whom much is given, of him shall much be required.”

“How filthy is this stable! Certainly it is long “since it was cleansed.” But it is not this world more filthy: what numerous troops of beastly men have been near six thousand years defiling it? Get hence, my soul, take not up thy rest here, for it is polluted. Nor shall it be thoroughly cleansed, till itself and its works are burned up, and its impenitent defilers driven out, into the infernal lake. And what am I? what devils and corrupt lusts have been stabled in me since my conception? from within come the things that defile me. Lord, deliver me from that most abominable thing, my wicked, my carnal heart. But stop, my soul; with wonder stop; was Jesus my great ALL, born in a stable, and laid in a manger? let endless and enraptured wonder rise. Was JEHOVAH born in a stable for me, that he might enter into, and reside in the unclean hell of my heart,

and prepare mansions in his Father's house for me? Did he lie in a manger, that he might live for ever betwixt my breasts, and I for ever in the embraces of his love?

"Now my horse is bridled." Be not, my soul, like the horse or mule, whose mouth must be held in with bit or bridle; never let carnal sense and lust ride on my reason. "I bid farewell to my family." Be persuaded, sirs, to choose for your head Jesus Christ, who will never bid you adieu, never leave you, nor forsake you. Behave in my absence as in God's sight. Let my present departure warn you, that God will quickly take me from being your head. Ponder, ponder, whether Jesus or Satan bids fairest to be my successor in your heart.

"Now I am on horseback." Think, my soul, of him that rides on clouds and cherubims for the help of his people; the great God who rode on a despicable ass for me; who rides on the white horse of the glorious gospel to subdue sinners to himself. Lord, ride prosperously, and let thine enemies fall under thee. "I set out on my journey." May the gracious Preserver of man and beast, bear me safely out, and bring me safely in. May all the various things which I happen to see, appear full of Christ: he made; he upholds; he directs; he actuates all things. May the earth, and the beasts thereof, to-day teach me; let the fowls of the air tell me, and the fishes of the sea declare unto me, the things which concern their KING. All nature is consecrated ground, teeming with growths divine; myself is the tabernacle of God; may all my cares and thoughts centre in him. Earth's turning from the sun, brings on our night;

man's turning heart and eyes from God, brings an awful endless night. What is creation, but the thin, the fleeting atmosphere of God! What are the changing seasons, but the various displays of God? In spring, forth shines his beauty, tenderness, and love. Then comes his glory in the summer months; from him the sun shoots full perfection through the swollen year; his voice in dreadful thunder speaks. His bounty shines in autumn unconfined, and spreads a feast for all that live. In winter he is awful, with clouds and storms. O great, O good Supreme! in all teach me what is good: teach me thyself: enrich me with the knowledge of thy works; thereby snatch my soul to heaven: let my thoughts from thee begin; dwell all on thee; with thee conclude the scene; let them never stray from thee. But stop, my conscience; is my soul set out heavenwards? is my heart now going forth to meet the Bridegroom? am I, by a present exercise of faith and love, sitting on the white horse of gospel-promises and influences; and following after him who is King of kings, and Lord of lords?

“How stately the steps! how great the strength!
“how bold the looks of his horse!” Rather, how gloriously the divine power and greatness shineth in him! how infinitely more august the aspect and goings of my God and my King who made him! How surpassing, that God should make this strong and stately creature so submissive to man! how much more so, that the Almighty himself should submit to bear my sin, my curse, my woe! and to bear and carry me to everlasting rest! Never more doubt, my soul, of all things working together for thy good;

and be thou as the Lord's goodly horse,* strong in Christ, and courageous in his way; but beware of neighing after thy lusts,† or rushing into temptation, as the horse rusheth into the battle. "This horse is at once so restive, that I must keep a sure bridle-hand; and so dull, that he must have plenty of the spur." Alas, my heart must be at once restrained and excited; must at once be drawn with cords of love, and spurred with reproofs and afflictions. Only he who rides on clouds, and sits on swelling waves, can manage her motions.—If I can scarce manage a horse; if I can by no means manage my heart; why should I presume to conduct the providence of God? let me rather cry unto God, unto God who performeth all things for me. "But at what doth my horse start, and stumble in the open street?" How often has my weak, rash, and careless heart, feared where no fear was! stumbled without cause in the streets and broad ways of divine ordinances! But, blessed be God, the white horse of evangelic promises and influences,‡ on which I ride to glory, neither fears troops of devils, nor can stumble on mountains of darkness, lust, guilt, or trouble. "How impartial is this horse! he regards me no more than he doth my servant." Can I then expect that my highness will procure me the regard of Heaven? will cause the king of terrors to cringe at my feet? or dare I prostitute my conscience to heap partial honours on the great? "An horse, however stately, is a vain thing for preservation." So let me count all creatures; let me use them as subordinate means of comfort; but put my trust only in the living God.

* Zech. x. 3.

† Jer. v. 8.

‡ Rev. xix. 11, 14.

“ Here is an excellent way, where it was wont to be scarce passable : at what vast expense hath it been finished !” O the glorious, the new and living way, where sin had made an unpassable gulph ! Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life ; no man cometh to the Father, but by him. With astonishment ponder, my soul, at what inestimable expense of JEHOVAH’S love, and of Jesus’ blood, this was opened, was finished for thee ! Here walk and wonder, all the days of thy life : having received the Lord Jesus, walk thou in him. “ I must pay for the agreeableness of this highway.” But nothing, nothing must I give for Christ : O sweet truth to me, who have nothing which I dare call my own, but my sin ! Cursed be my pride, that ever prompted me to present my self-righteousness, my splendid sins to the Most High, as the price of his Son, and of redemption through him—O astonishing grace, that he did not bid me perish with my money, because I thought the gift of God might be purchased with it !

“ Here is the turnpike gate, through which I am obliged to pass.” And by the strait gate of regeneration must I enter on the way of holiness, the way to the heavenly Zion ; for except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Christ is at once my gate and my way ; by this the just do enter in. “ I cannot tell this keeper, that that gentleman before paid for me.” But blessed be the Lord, that when law or justice seem to demand aught from me, I can boldly tell them, my forerunner Christ paid all for me. “ I am scarce passed, when the gate is again shut.” But my

gate Christ is ever open for new comers, as long as sun and moon endure. Having once passed the gate of regeneration, I cannot get back ;—and quickly the gates of glory shall be shut after me, that I may never go out. “ The ticket which I have got here, “ will procure me free passage at the next gate.” Rejoice, my soul, the everlasting covenant, made with me in my union to Christ, will procure me an abundant entrance into the metropolis of glory above : by means of it I shall stand in death, and in the judgment : let me cleave fast to it ; let my right hand forget her cunning, if I forget it, and do not lay it up in the inmost repositories of my heart. Blessed transaction, thou wilt rather preserve me than I keep thee ! “ But foot passengers pay nothing at this “ gate, and these with unsaddled horse but the half “ of what I have done.” If our worldly stations be low, our wants are but few : he that increaseth his comforts in any thing besides Christ, increaseth his burdens.

“ Now I have turned my back on the place of my “ abode ; perhaps I may never return ; or if I do, “ may meet the corpse of some of my family going “ to his long home the grave.” O to have all our life hid with Christ in God ! bound up in the bundle of life with him ! that even in death we may live with, and go to him, and afterwards appear with him in glory. Death’s separation of those in Christ is both short and sweet.

“ Hark how melodiously these larks do sing !— “ how high in æther’s fields they soar.” Sweet birds, were ye redeemed ? redeemed with blood divine ? Sure not ; cease, then, to sting my heart ; rather

ating me to the quick. Ah ! while ye soar and sing ; how deep immersed in sin and earth, I lie ! how few ; how heartless, and ill-tuned, are my songs of praise, to sovereign grace ! O to soar above the skies, and sing new songs to my well beloved ; to have my mouth filled with the high praises of my God ! my God who died for me !

“ Among yonder trees, the crows pour forth their “ harsh notes.” Lord, “ all thy works praise thee, and thy saints bless thee ; the eyes of all things wait upon thee,” and seek their meat from thee ; thou openest thine hand liberally, and satisfiest the desire of all living : O how great thy riches that enableth ; and thy munificence, which determines thee to nourish all creation at thy table ! Because I am altogether wants, I will call on thee : surely thou wilt not feed crows, and ravens that cry, and starve a crying soul, which thou hast redeemed. “ Ye hoarse crows, “ ye comely doves, how doth the summer pinch “ you, while others riot in plenty ! but rejoice, the “ fattening harvest draw nigh.” No outward prosperity but bears hard upon some ; nothing answers all things but my God. Rejoice, my soul, amidst present straits ; the full, the fattening harvest of glory approacheth ; then shalt thou eat, and be satisfied, and praise the Lord ; your heart shall ever live that seek him. “ No doubt, you birds, the “ industrious farmer, who owns the earliest corns, “ will be offended at your voracious feeding thereon.” But, blessed Jesus, thou wilt never be displeased with my plentiful repast on the riches of thy grace : thou wilt never fray me away : never expose me to

danger on that account. May I, like the hungry birds, early seek after God.

“How brightly doth this morning sun ascend,
“while a thousand sons of disorder and sloth drink
“in their midnight sleep !” How these day dreamers
contemn this common, this free inestimable gift of
Heaven ! Yesternight candles gave them light ; now
they refuse God’s bright lamp of day. Doth not this
exchanging of day with night cross the natural hints
of the divine will ? Doth it not hurt our bodies ? Is
it not to lose the pleasant views, and the fresh gales
of the rising morn ?—to squander away the most
proper period of thought ?—Think, my soul, of
Jesus the Sun of Righteousness : in death he set all in
red : in his resurrection morning he rose, rose with
ten thousand charms : thrice sure token of an endless
blissful day in heaven. But is Jesus duly prized ?
No ; to their inexpressible danger, thousands rather
walk in the light of the sparks which they have kind-
led, than walk in his free, his glorious, and refresh-
ful brightness : thousands waste the precious morn-
ing of youth and gospel-opportunity in sloth and
guilt : and thence spend their endless night amidst
the sparks of Tophet. Come not, my soul, into
their secret ; mine honour, be thou not united.
My flesh, like this morning sun, shall hereafter rise
from her grave ; Jesus shall change my vile body,
and make it like unto his glorious body, according
to the working, whereby he is able to subdue all
things to himself.

“How plentifully the early dew lies upon the
“ground ! how nourishing, how refreshing to the
“plants and soil !” How often hath my soul been

restored and revived with the gracious influence of my Redeemer, who is as the refreshing, the fructifying dew to his people. Neither can I restrain, "nor bring down this falling dew." No more, Lord, can I revive my soul before thy time of love; and when it cometh, neither sloth, guilt, nor rebellious opposition, can prevent thy gracious approaches to her. O be always to me as the dew that waiteth not for man! "How numerous these pearly drops!" But far more numerous are Jesus' favour to my soul. I am loaded with his benefits: they are new every morning; and great is his faithfulness. And numerous as the dew, be the comely, the only converts of his church. "How dry are these hard stones amidst the rankness of this dew!" O how hardness, and impenitency of heart, bereaves us of divine influence, and makes us as these stones, which know not when good cometh! while the gospel is a savour of life to some, it is a savour of death to others. Lord, grant me spiritual sap, that to him that hath, it may be given, till he have abundance.

"What a marvellous change the late rains, and warmth, have made on the face of the earth! how quickly the vegetables have grown up these few weeks past!" Even so, Lord Jesus, when thy Spirit is poured forth as waters upon the thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; when the warming influence of thy bleeding love melts our heart, how doth thy church, how doth my soul grow up "as willows by the water-courses!" But, alas! how often in the summer-season of gospel ordinances, hath all been witheredness and drought with me! How often do the numberless plants on these delightful fields,

bear awful witness against me ! have they grown so much in a few weeks, and my grace almost nothing these many years ? “ Lo, how they point, and rise towards heaven, from whence they receive their fructifying warmth and moisture ! ” Blush deep, my soul ; tremble with a very great trembling : behold how these millions witness against thy earthly mindedness, thy apostacy from God, thy growth towards hell. Alas ! why have not I more set my affections on things above, where Jesus is at the right hand of God, and whence I receive every good and perfect gift ? What mean my fond embraces, the wanton glances which I cast on created comforts ? If my treasure be in heaven, why is my heart so far from it ? why are so few of my thoughts there ? why should a moth-eaten creature steal one thought away from God ?

“ Here, through unwariness, I have fallen from “ my horse.” Alas, how often hath my soul fallen by her iniquity ! how sadly hath she been broken and bruised ? O what a mercy, that God raiseth the bowed down, and upholdeth them that fall ! and that my sores, my sins, occasion Jesus’ labour on my soul, as the Lord my God that healeth me ! “ I am “ scarce hurt.” What a mercy is it, thou Preserver of man and beast ! how excellent is thy loving kindness ! “ How quickly am I risen again ! ” So, when I fall by sin, let God speedily recover me, raise me up, set my feet upon a rock, and establish my goings ; and when I sit in darkness or distress, may he be a light and comfort to me.

“ What late improvements have been made on “ these fields ! ” But ah, how little in my heart and

life, or in the corner where I have my abode ! Alas ! we improve in every thing but the principal, the one thing necessary. " What ditching and hedging are " here ! " Lord Jesus, dig about me ; hedge up my way with thorns ; or any thing else that I may not overtake my lovers, nor follow my lusts : be thou my defence and stay, to protect me from the blasts of divine wrath, or the wild beasts of devils, and indwelling corruption :—I am not half redeemed, if sin, the tyrant reign. " Did I break over these dikes " or hedges, and ride on the inclosed ground, should " I not expose myself to a penalty ? " and if I break over the mound of the divine law, or by despising it, tread upon the hedge of trouble, shall not the vengeance of God, an awakened conscience, and the old serpent, the devil, bite me ! " How surprising the " effect of industry on this field ! now it is fat and " fertile ; not long ago it was quite barren : the adjacent ground is still so." So the gracious industry of Heaven makes his chosen more excellent than their neighbour : what but this maketh them to differ ! Alas, my wretched self, how little industry have I tried upon thee ! and how little effect has the distinguished industry of God had on thee ! I am of the same cursed soul with Judas, Ahab, or Cain : and how small is the difference betwixt their ways and mine ! nor is that which is in the least owing to me, but entirely to God's sovereign grace.

" Here the high-way is turned about to please a " gentleman." But bless the Lord, O my soul, that neither great nor small, height nor depth, nor any other creature, can either stop, straiten, or change my new and living way : they shall be changed ;

but he is the same : they shall perish ; but he shall endure : he is “ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”—“ Excellent as this new way is, it beats my “ horse’s feet, and will need frequent repair.” But never shall my way to the Father need repair : he hath, “ by one offering, perfected them that are sanctified, and obtained eternal redemption for us :” never shall walking in him hurt the feet, the affections of my soul ; but shall restore, strengthen, and comfort me.

“ Here a ditch and hedge stop me ; willingly I “ deserted the high-way to obtain a shorter : but I “ must go back to recover it, and so make my way “ longer than I needed.” When, my soul, did I gain by deserting the high-way of God’s law ; the high-way of redemption, through the blood of his Son ; or the high-way of the lot which he appointed for me ? Have not all my attempts of this nature issued in shame, confusion, and double trouble ? Tho’ the whole day of my life is too short for my journey to eternity ; yet ah, how much of it has been worse than vainly spent ! the loss of time is most dreadful and irrecoverable, and yet least thought of. Ah, how often have I fatigued myself with random excursions from my proper path ! But, blessed be the Lord, who, by sharp reproofs and thorny hedges of trouble hath, times without number, stopt me short, and made me say, “ I will go and return to my first husband ; for then it was better with me than now.”

“ What a rich inheritance ! what a charming habitation hath this nobleman here ! how pleasant “ the environs ! how sweet the prospect ! how

“wholesome the air! how fine the water!” Envy him not, my soul; perhaps it is his ALL! if he is without Christ, better that he begged his bread in desolate places, and embraced the rock, for want of a shelter: for “in how much he lives deliciously, so much torment and sorrow shall be given him.” Perhaps, amidst all this abundance, yonder beggar enjoys firmer health, sounder sleep, and a more peaceful breast than he. Earthly enjoyments, like scorpions, have stings in their tails; they sting us with care while we have them, with pain when we leave them, and with grief when they leave us: at best they are but sickly dying friends: scarcely have we seen them when they give up the ghost; they perish in our fond embrace, and leave a throbbing heart. How quickly the rich sons of wealth flow down the streams of false enchanting joy, into a lasting ruin! How fast the flowing spring of youth issues in the ardent summer of mid life! next their half sober autumn fades into age; and pale wintry death concludes the scene. Where now their empty dreams of greatness! their longings after fame! their restless cares! their busy bustling nights and days! their gay spent fashionable nights! their veering thoughts between good and ill! their sparkling eyes! their charming tongue! their round of merriment and whim! How often these dreamers of the earth are but an idle blank, an useless load! nay, worse, how often they all day long in sordid pleasure roll, and launch into the deeps of riot and extravagance! how often they squander on their scoundrel train what might have cheered an helpless family!—How often death crowns their midnight bowl, and laughs at

them who laugh at him ! Our inheritance is not as theirs, our enemies themselves being judges : Jesus, the alone portion of my cup, and my inheritance for ever, is ever, is universally sweet and charming ! how infinitely glorious, firm and commodious, is the Lord, my habitation ! what ravishing prospect of eternity, past and future ! what transporting views of God as LOVE ! what wholesome air of divine influence ! what broad river of life have I in him ! whatever I can see is mine own ; and I enjoy it all in God. Nor shall death, nor life, nor any other creature, be ever able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus my Lord. Say then, my soul, would I exchange my property with this nobleman's, or even with ten thousand worlds ? No, they should " be utterly condemned ; the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places ; I have a goodly heritage." I am JEHOVAH's, and JEHOVAH is mine ; my God, and mine ALL.

" Here the beggar accosts me ; had I appeared as " himself, he had asked nothing : but now he uncovers, he cringeth, he cries for relief." Lord, let me never ask help from the creatures which are as poor, as dependant, as myself ; but with humility, with earnestness, let me address thee, my great ALL, for the supply of all my wants ; thy liberal soul deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall thy fame for ever stand. " Mark how he discovers his " ailment to move my pity !" Let me confess my trespasses unto the Lord, bewail my sins and plague, before him, that he may graciously look upon me, forgive my guilt, and heal my malady. " Ah, how " tattered and nasty the unhappy wretch !" Mis-

chievous waster, sin, what hast thou done to thy votaries ! Alas ! I am "all as an unclean thing, and my righteousness as filthy rags." "He is a wicked fellow, he lightly mentions my great Maker's name ; therefore I'll give him nothing." Stop, my soul, what if God should so deal with thee ? Did not Jesus die for the ungodly ? did he not give himself for, and to me, the chief of sinners ! Canst thou pretend to be a Christian, and yet refuse to imitate him ! "But let others who are richer give." Foolish heart, is not this poor man a collector of JEHQVAH's revenues ? Owe I nothing to my Lord, owe I not my soul, my all to him ? is it not of his mercy that I am not in the very case of this wretch ? What if I, or my seed, should be so reduced ! How often have I observed, that a penny kept back from the Lord, hath been a pound kept out of men's way ? Is it not with the merciful that God will shew himself merciful ?—Doth not he that giveth to the poor lend to the Lord, who will repay it with usury ?—Let me, therefore, according to my ability, and from love to Jesus, grant this man relief. But have I nothing to bestow for the benefit of his soul ? shall his belly bless me, and soul for ever curse me, that I would not bestow a sentence of spiritual admonition upon him ?

"Here the sagacious cur comes, leading his blind master ; how he guides him about the mire, and "directs him to the door !" Mother of all living, how hath thy hearkening to a serpent blinded and degraded thine offspring ! how many of them are led by beastly lusts, by beastly companions, or careless teachers, who lead them into everlasting woe ! —O the sagacity of this animal ! What, then, the

wisdom of him who maketh matter so sagacious! who maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven, and beasts of the earth! that can charge his angels with folly! Behold, my soul, how this poor man trusts his life to his cur; and blush deep that, times without number, thou hast refused to trust thy God with things of smaller import? O Jesus, how often have blind I refused to be led by thee in the way which I knew not.

“ Here a band of soldiers march to the war : perhaps having lost leg or arm in the service of their country, they will be set adrift to beg their bread.” Pursue and court the world as we please, it will prove ungrateful : But, O generous Mediator, if once I truly enlist under thy banner, to fight with sin, Satan, and the world, thou wilt never cast me off; but arm, protect, feed, clothe, bear, and carry me, bind up my wounds, exalt me to thy throne, and give me a crown of life. Let me, therefore, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, endure hardness, exercise courage, and study faithfulness.* “ Yonder their wives, or perhaps their harlots, follow them.” Silly women, they have doubtless heard or seen the wretched case of others, who took that course before; yet how cheerfully they now pursue it themselves! Lord Jesus, how gladly will sinners follow any but thee : Too probably, many of these women’s connection hath begun in folly and lust; shall it not end in misery and woe?† Sin may be sweet in the mouth, but bitter in the belly; pleasant in acting, but awful to endure the stings of conscience, or the vengeance of hell for it.

* 2 Tim. iv. 8, and ii. 3.

† Prov. ii. 16—19.

“Here they drive home the winter coal.” Doth God bid his earth empty her bowels, to warm his enemies, whose just portion is eternal fire? Did he send his Son from his bosom to save us? Did Jesus empty his heart of precious life, that I might be forever comforted with his love?—Let me then treasure up his promises, and kind providences, in my heart, to warm it in the cold winter of affliction and death. “Here the unmerciful driver adds himself to the “burden of the weary beast.” Little do many think, that they must answer to God for the abuse of his creatures. How often, when I have been laden with outward trouble, dark desertion, and deep challenge of consciences, hath Satan burdened me with his horrid temptations? and the more I yielded, the more he abused me.—Lord free me from his hands, cruel and unjust. “Now I meet a company of our young “gentry: how blooming their features! how sparkling their eyes! how cheerful their looks!” Let no created beauty enchant me: how much fairer is my Christ, the brightness of the Father’s glory, that made them such: Here is a face of comeliness, with inward parts filled with all unrighteousness; perhaps a face of joy, and heart of pain. “How high their “heads:—what levity shines in their countenance! “what contemptuous pride sits brooding in their “glance! how loud their peals of laughter!” What monsters had they been reckoned, if God had formed them with such heads! I fear their heads and hearts are too high for Jesus Christ, and his salvation; though not too high for death or hell. I wish the Lord knew them not afar off: is not the proud look an abomination to him? Do not fools alway affect to

be on the laughing side?—But shall they stand in God's sight? Can these sons and daughters of gaiety enchant the king of terrors? Can they command respect from the ill-bred vermin of the grave? Can finery bribe the angry Judge? Can honoured blood quench the flames of hell? Can beauty charm a roused conscience, or a tormenting fiend?—"Ah, how they lard their speech with horrid oaths." Are they obliged to talk blasphemy, for want of sense to speak any thing else? Have they finished their education in Tophet? or are they fond of an eternity there, that they are already adepts in the language of it? Friends, how my bowels yearn towards you! how I pity your case! Is nothing baser than your Maker's name, to make a by-word of? Is Satan your principal friend, the darling of your heart, that he dwells so much on your tongue? Is nothing more sweet than damnation, which you so often imprecate? Why, with such intermixture, render your converse stupid and unmannerly? Why, without either profit or pleasure, do things whereof ye shall be ashamed? Hath not your Maker, your Judge, solemnly charged you, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.—Swear not at all, neither by heaven, nor by earth: but let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil."

"Now I overtake a burial." Perhaps it is an only child, an useful neighbour, a kind husband, or beloved wife: but nothing now avails, but Jesus formed in his heart, and applied to him as his eternal robe.—Lord, in the view of my approaching exit,

I take hold of thee, and thy everlasting covenant, as all my salvation, and all my desire ; to thee I commit my spirit : according to thy promise, satisfy me with life, and cause mine eyes to see thy salvation. I leave my fatherless children on thee ; and let my widow trust in thee. Much of me is dead already : my best friends are mostly gone ; gone, I fear, to Jesus' tribunal, to witness against my neglecting to profit, or to be profited by them : parents, brothers, and sisters, are entered into a dread eternity : death hath carried off my pleasant children, as hostages and pledges, that I must quickly follow : my remaining seed grow up to thrust me out of my present room. Long hath God been loosing my roots on earth, that he may the more easily pluck me up at last. Perhaps, in my remaining half hand-breadth of time, he will strip me of every relation ; of every outward comfort : the Lord hath given, and if the Lord take away, blessed be the name of the Lord : happy they, whose friends are not lost in death, but gone before.

“ Surprising ! these buriers attend the corpse with
“ no more apparent sense of future things, than if
“ they interred a dog : indecent laughter, talking
“ of common news, or even making of merchandise,
“ employs them.” Have the people in this country
no immortal souls ? Is there no heaven, no hell, no
eternity before them ? Shall the stupid flock be for
a while startled, when the butcher carries off one of
their number ? and are there men, whose conscience
takes no alarm, when death carries off their compa-
nion into an awful, an endless state ? Ah ! what
precious moments, what instructive hints, what rous-

ing alarms, these thoughtless sinners contemn! God forbid that tormenting flames should first teach them to think.

“Lo, here is a burying-place.” Multitudes, multitudes are in this valley of decision; small and great are here: rich and poor meet together; enemies mutually embrace: “the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.” “Let me turn aside and view this open grave.” To have one eye on death, another full fixed on heaven, becomes a mortal and immortal man. Is such my future mansion? is such dust all that I, and all that the proud, shall be? must such clods and worms be my sweet companions? detested be my pride that ends so vile. O that I were wise; that I understood this; that I could consider my last end. But is not the grave the place where Jesus lay? then welcome, thrice welcome grave to me. With desire have I desired to feel the place where the Lord lay; that I may eat the great passover with him in the temple above. Christ is mine; and therefore, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

“Now the corpse is interred, and many of the attendants are gone to drink the dirge.” Ah! while perhaps their friend howls and roars amidst untender fire, shall they carouse over their bottle? Hath Satan devised these dirges to quench every spark of concern which the death of friends can kindle in our breast?

“Yonder stands a magnificent house: at vast expense the late owner reared it; and, when it was just finished, he retired to his grave.” Deceitful earth, is this thy usage of thy noble friends, to wind

up their expectations to the highest ; and then suddenly cast them down into destruction ? blot me them out of their number. If riches, honors, or pleasures increase, let me not set my heart upon them : let my soul never look upon the wine of earthly enjoyments “ when it is red, when it giveth its colours in the cup : at the last it will bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder.” Whenever I behold or enjoy any thing noble, magnificent, or pompous ; let me seriously reflect how little it is to fill the idea, and satisfy the ambition of an immortal soul.

“ Here is a cottage mean to a proverb : here the “ colliers dwell.” Ungrateful earth, is this thy kindness to thy dear son, who lies and labours in thy bosom ?—who, I fear, gives thee his heart, as well as takes thine ; he toils to warm others ; yet himself has scarce either robes or roof to resist the cold :—Poor soul ! hast thou provided a better lodging for eternity ? is this wretched hut thy best heaven ? art thou the pleased heir of a double hell ? or is the Lord Jesus thy sure, thy everlasting habitation ?—Lord, I bless thee for my more commodious dwelling ; and that, when the hut of my frail body shall be dissolved, I have a house eternal in the heavens.—“ Yonder bearers of the softer sex : how sinking their load ! yet how cheerful their song !” How many, laden with iniquity, with the curse of their Maker, descend to the bottomless pit amidst thoughtless folly and mirth ?—But learn, my soul, to rejoice in tribulation, and in every state therewith to be content : rejoice in the Lord ; cast all thy burdens upon him, and he shall sustain thee. “ Yonder is a col-

“**liar, or chimney-sweeper: a true swatch of unsightliness.**” With grief and shame behold thyself, my soul, for thou art black; black not as a painted but as a real demon. Do thou, Jesus, wash me; then shall I be whiter than the snow. Make me perfect, through thy comeliness put upon me.

“**Here lies a female besotted with drink.**” O loathsome sight! Ah, easy prey for hell! Ah, what degrading! what worse than beastly vice is drunkenness? Are those men? Can they be Christians, who give up themselves to it? What a mercy that my cursed lust does not, just now, so expose me!—But, alas, how am I intoxicated with self-conceit, carnal care, or angry passion! how often my mind is wrought into a raging ocean, to waft a feather, or to drown a fly! “**Here comes a lame man leaping on crutches.**” Fallen in Adam, like Jonathan’s son, I am lame on both my feet; can go no where in the Lord’s way; but may heaven’s king show me kindness for my father Jesus’ sake: cause me to dwell in his presence, and eat bread continually at his table. Blessed be his name, he hath provided crutches, provided promises, provided Jesus, to be legs to the lame, and eyes to the blind. On him let me lean all the days of my life. A time cometh when “**the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.**”

“**Now I have rode some miles with this company: most of them, I guess, are professed saints: one of them is a minister. Largely, and with great precision, have they talked concerning common news and temporal affairs; but nothing con-**

"cerning Jesus and his love; nothing concerning matters of eternal moment hath dropped from their lips." Alas! Abiram's curse hath seized them, the earth hath opened her mouth, and swallowed them up alive; swallowed, I fear, their souls, thoughts, words, and actions: let me flee afar off, lest the earth swallow me up also. Ah! it is already done: partly a dumb, partly a carnal devil, hath entered me; how little can I say, that is heavenly and spiritual? Doth not my readiness to mingle in earthly converse, testify, that, like the serpent, my soul feedeth on dust? Ah, are there no news from heaven? no new mercies from above? no news from the busy regions of our heart? Are the glad tidings of great joy to all people now out of date? or are the ears of this generation too polite to hear any thing that is worthy to be heard?

"How richly feed the flocks and herds within yonder inclosure;" Thoughtless animals, you are fed to the slaughter, and know it not. What numbers of unthinking mortals are fattened to the slaughter of eternal woe; and, at last, shall decay as fat of lambs; fret not, my soul, that God refuses me the portion of reprobates. Scorn and pitied be they who think themselves brutes, who live as if there were not an hereafter.

"Here is a beautiful well of running water; let me alight and refresh myself." Rather let me descend from the heights of my self-conceit, and with joy draw water out of the wells of salvation; **JEHOVAH**, Jesus, the blessed Spirit, and every promise of the new covenant. How deep! how large, these fountains of living waters, containing all the

fulness of God ! all the fulness of grace and truth ! Out of this ever fresh, ever running and refreshful fulness, let me receive, and grace for grace.

“How large the river which springs from yonder rocks ! But O that river of redeeming love, which issues from JEHOVAH’s heart ! that river of blood, which springs from Calvary ! that river of life, which flows from beneath the throne of God and of the Lamb ! that river of gospel truth which proceeds from the Spirit of all grace ! These, these are the rivers that refresh the city of our God, in heaven or in earth ; these, the source of our purity ; the means of our spiritual trade ; the desire of our eyes : here let me drink and forget my misery : here let me bathe, that my flesh may become fresher than that of a child ; here let me swim for my recreation : here let me fish for new draughts of immortal bliss.

“Some spots of ground are now withered ; but “at this river side all is verdant and flourishing.” Live near Jesus, my soul : never pass a day without special fellowship with him ; so, while others fade and wither in noon-tides of temptation, shalt thou be fat and flourishing. How, ye ransomed, shall we for ever flourish in JEHOVAH’s immediate presence ! there shall we bid an everlasting adieu to our withered heart, and blasted life ; there shall we bring forth fruits of perfect holiness ; our leaf shall never fade ; and all we do shall prosper.

“What a mercy for our sight, that nature is “wrapped in almost universal green ! This doth not, “as some other colours, dazzle and weaken, but refresh and invigorate my eyes.” But is it not far better that our pasture, our bed of the new cove-

nant of scripture-revelation, and of fellowship with God, is green, fresh, cheering, and invigorating to my soul? No more is God a consuming fire to devour me; but in Jesus, all his names, perfections, and titles, are green, flourishing, and fattening pasture to my heart.

“Yonder company follows hard. I suppose it is “my * * * * friends.” Lord, permit not ungodly acquaintance to draw my heart from thee: now it so bends towards heaven, that I am unwilling, and almost incapable to bring it down to converse with men on earth: often have reading and hearing wearied me; but how can I tire of such sweet meditation on thyself! O how the thoughts of thy perfections, thy relations, thy purposes, thy words, thine acts, and thy gifts, enlighten, enrapture, and enflame my heart! How sweetly am I lost in wonder at thy greatness and thy grace! Is this God mine? wholly mine? Did he love me, and give himself for me? and give himself to me? How my soul blusheth, that ever created nothings were all to me; and God, the great ALL, nothing! What a hell, to live without God as our portion, our hope, and our chiefest joy! But happy he, that searcheth, sighs, pants, and thirsts for him: blessed he who clasps redeeming Godhead in the embraces of his soul, and is embraced by him. My God, thou hast loved me with an everlasting love—And oh, how I love thee! how my heart-strings break with desire and estimation of thee! O to expire thus amidst the kisses, the arms of a smiling God! thine absence will be heavier than a thousand deaths. “My friends gain much ground on me.” Alas, my lazy, wicked heart, how hast thou detained

me in my journey heavenward ! how many born after me were in Christ before me ! how many born again after me have got beyond me in their way to their Father's house ! O to be there, where friends shall not disturb my fellowship with God. " Each hath a flower in his breast, to refresh him amidst this sultry heat of noon." Let Jesus, the refreshing, the never-fading Flower of Paradise, the Rose of Sharon, and Lily of the Valley, lie all night between my breasts ; let his good favor restore and enliven my heart. " Your servant, gentlemen." Let our meeting resemble our gathering to Christ in the general assembly of the first-born from among men. Let the high praises of God, and his redeeming love, be in our mouths. Friends, hath not this been a short, a sweet hour ? " Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and opened to us the Scriptures ? Have not we had mirth indeed ? mirth, that, I am sure, is not mad ? How sweetly have we been refreshed with the new wine of heaven : and talked over the good news that come from a far country ! Have not our hearts indited good matter concerning Jesus our King ! and our tongues been like the pen of a ready writer, to utter his praise ! With what pleasure shall this conference meet us at death, and the tribunal !—Say, my soul, have I not rode as with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ? Is not this a prelude of my meeting with angels, and spirits of just men made perfect ? How hath time been won, not wasted in this company ! " Now we must part." But let us rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, and of our endless fellowship in the regions of bliss ; where, with unblemished hearts,

we shall quickly meet with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost :—and what shall we more say? “Is this the manner of men, O Lord?”

“I must alight at this inn, refresh myself, and “bait my horse.” Thrice happy day, when I shall need inns no more; but be a pillar in the temple of my God!—But, blessed Redeemer, how graciously hast thou provided us the inns of ordinances, to refresh our souls! and of houses and graves, to refresh our bodies, in our way to heaven! “Yonder comes “one to receive me, and my weary beast.” And how often in the entrance of duty, hath the blessed promise, in the hand of the Spirit, taken hold of my weary, brutish, carnal heart, and refreshed, and strengthened her, with the straw and provender of heavenly food. So shall death seize my wearied body, and kindly convey her to the grave, to rest till Jesus call her up to his throne. So shall angels lay hold on my weary soul, and carry her into Abraham’s bosom, to be refreshed with all the fulness of God. “Large inn, thou hast a handsome out-“side.” But I wish you be not too like that of Bethlehem, where there was no room for Jesus Christ!—Ah, can there be room here for harlots, drunkards, and profane swearers; and none for the Son of God, the Saviour of the world? Alas, my heart, how much room is in thee for Satan, the world, and thy filthy lusts; yet how little for Christ!

“In yonder chamber one states an account, and “receives payment from his friend.” How often has Jesus stated a long, an awful account against me! made me with terror, grief, and shame, examine and acknowledge its justness; and then with one

dash blotted out the whole, saying, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee!—Thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities, and caused me to serve with thy sins: I, even I, am he that blotteth out thine iniquities, and thy transgressions for my name's sake; and will remember thy sins no more." "How yonder monkey gazes in the mirror! sees his own shadow! touches the glass! peeps, and looks, and gains no, more:" Ah, what mere shadows do men sport with, and scratch to obtain! how little more they see, or seek to find, but the mighty shadow of themselves! "Here one comes to the door, so stupid, that he can scarce tell his errand." How often go I to the throne of grace, the gate of mercy, without knowing what I want! so foolish, ignorant, and as a beast before God! But though I, though men be fools; yet God is wise.

"How quickly is our dinner got ready!" And in Christ's ordinances all things are ready: he, his adored Father, and blessed Spirit, are ready to sit, and sup with me; angels and ministers ready to serve me; peace, pardon, and every other new covenant blessing, ready to be bestowed on me. Art thou, my soul, EVER UNREADY? "Here we get every thing we ask." But in Christ we have more than we can ask or think. Lord, how rich is thy mercy! how excellent is thy loving-kindness! "What instructive monitors are here before me?" This table is an emblem of gospel-ordinances, at which, while the King sitteth, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof. "This flesh of bullock, calf, or lamb," calls to my remembrance Jesus, who was

led to the slaughter : Jesus, the fatted calf, slain to feed prodigal men ; Jesus, the Lamb of God, who expired on Calvary for me. " This bread, perhaps of " the finest of the wheat," suggests a thought of Jesus, the corn of wheat, who brought forth much fruit ; of Jesus, who was bruised, and roasted for me ; of Jesus, who is the true bread, who came down from heaven. " This seasoning salt" suggests a meditation of the new covenant of salt, which endureth to all generations ; and whose blessings are pure, purifying, and incorruptible :—it bids me praise the Lord, that I am not salted with eternal fire ; and warns me to season my heart and practice with the prevailing influence of the salt of grace. " This liquor," represents to my thought Jesus, who in his refreshing blood, and sanctifying grace, is drink indeed ; and the ever new wine of everlasting joy, which I shall drink with him in his Father's kingdom.

" What company are those I am to dine with?" Are they " the excellent ones of the earth, in whom is all my delight?"—" Stop, friend ; dare not to " partake of Heaven's mercies, till we have craved " his leave, and asked his blessing : without this, " they may prove poison to our body ; shall prove " death to our soul." If the polite manners of the age render men brutes, or atheists, let them be far from me. " This man, whom we have employed " as our mouth, in asking a blessing, hath addressed " his Maker in so ignorant and irreverent a manner, " as may bring a curse, rather than a blessing, on our " food." Lord, grant thy blessing ; though it is worse than unasked.—" Let us thank God for our

“provision.” What a mercy is such a dinner to the first-rate deservers of damnation ! “The bill is got, and the reckoning paid.” How quickly will Jesus come, and finally reckon with us in the last judgment : But, blessed for ever be his name, that we have nothing to pay for his rich provision, his feast of fat things ; whosoever will, let him take of it freely. “Now I have got rid of these wicked men.” But when shall I get rid of my wicked heart ? No companion cleaveth so close as self-love, and sinful lust : no foe more hard, or more honourable to conquer. “How have we behaved at this entertainment ?” Idle jargon, reproach of neighbours, and even smutty language, and minced oaths, have seasoned our conversation.—Seasoning sent from hell indeed ! Did we receive our tongues, thus to dishonour God ? No wonder, that wicked member, that world of iniquity, be peculiarly tormented in hell.—Alas, while feeding on God’s bounty, and refreshing our body with his goodness, we have insulted his honour, and mortally wounded our soul ? Alas, how dear bought is this meal to me ! Better is a dry morsel, a dinner of herbs, seasoned with religious converse, than this splendid feast, received with offences, and followed with agony of mind. Lord, I am verily guilty concerning my brethren’s blood ! Could not I have pushed an edifying converse ? Could not I have reprov’d them, at least by a hanging brow, or an angry countenance ? Could not I have inwardly grieved for thy dishonour ? Could not I have stopped my wretched ears from hearing the infectious sound ? Could not I have restrained my unruly tongue from bearing any part in the

conversation? Woes me! a wound and dishonour have I got: and my reproach shall not be wiped away.—Ah, how have I turned out, when God left me, to try what was in my heart! O for thy name's sake, pardon mine iniquity, for it is very great!" After this consenting with the wicked, I blush to take thy covenant in my vile mouth: but to whom can I go? thou alone hast the words of eternal life. O henceforth preserve me from unnecessary fellowship with wicked men; rather let me have to do with plagued, than with carnal and profane persons. God pity those professed Christians, who relish such for their companions.

"Now I again pursue my journey." What a miracle of divine patience and mercy, that I am not thus far on my way to the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone? "Here sits a poor object, perhaps both blind and lame, waiting for alms from such as pass by." To sit at the way-side of ordinances till Jesus pass by, is all that my blind and lame soul can do. Lord, I am poor and needy, make, therefore, no tarrying.

"Here is a garden at my side." Striking memorial of my fall in Eden! Striking hint of my Saviour's suffering in Gethsemane! and of the restful paradise which remaineth for the people of God! In a garden I sinned, and forfeited my bliss: in a garden Jesus suffered, was buried, and rose again, to procure an everlasting paradise for me. Now I am in the garden of the church militant; quickly I hope to enter that of the church triumphant; and may my soul be the garden of the Lord of hosts; and my various graces his pleasant plants. Let me turn mine eyes

“from the field to this orchard.” Turn thine eyes, my soul, from all worldly science to meditate on the oracles of God ; from all creatures, to fix on God himself. “How nobly is this garden fenced ! how well duned and digged ! how orderly laid out, carefully weeded, and skilfully pruned ! how pleasant and fruitful !” May the church, may my heart resemble it ! Support, Lord, the despised government and discipline of thy church ; give pastors according to thine own heart : bless with abundance of peace and truth : cause every one to walk regularly in his proper station ; cast out strife and disorder ; root up delusion and error ; make ordinances fruitful to bring forth and nourish thy saints. Preserve my heart by thy power and love ; fatten and soften it with thy gracious influence ; cause all my powers to concur in thy service ; pluck up every weed of corruption ; by reproof and trouble, lop off all my luxuriant superfluity of naughtiness ; and make me fruitful in every good word and work. “What labour, what bowed down backs, sweating brows, and toiling hands, are necessary to keep this garden in proper case !” Let idleness, that cursed prompter of Satan to tempt us, be far from me : let heart and hands be ever occupied in the service of my God : to manage my heart, my life, my office among men, is work, is labour indeed : it far transcends my power and skill ; but do thou, Lord, perform all things in, and for me. “How every plant is fitted to the season properest for her growth, her perfume, or her fruit.” And is not every thing in my lot, trouble, deliverance, trial, or comfort, sent in its proper season ? This, this, renders

them doubly pleasant, useful, or comely. "How
"charming the beauty and fragrancy of this gar-
"den!" Were my conversation in heaven, how
should I be charmed with the sweet smell, and the
precious views of the paradise above! how trans-
porting the believing foretastes of the glory that shall
be revealed! "Had I been here with the rising sun,
"how much more pleasant the aspect, and fragrant
"the smell!" O the singular advantage of an early
knowledge of Christ! and of early fellowship with
him! Woes me, that I am but one born out of due
time; and that from the earliest childhood, I did not
know the God of my fathers.

"How ripe are yonder garden-pease, while those
"in the field do but bloom!" O how quickly would
nearness to God, eminent fellowship with Christ,
ripen me for the marriage-supper of the Lamb!
"What a multitude of useful herbs are here!" But
O the much more useful, much more abundant sim-
ples, that grow in JEHOVAH's word! in his heaven!
Who can express, who can conceive the extent, the
excellency, of all the fulness of God?

"What loads of mellifluous fruit doth yonder
"apple-tree, with her fellows, bring forth!" As
the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my
beloved among the sons. I sat down under his sha-
dow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to
my taste. Thrice precious bearer of twelve manner
of fruits every month, and whose leaves are for the
healing of the nations; may I for ever contemplate,
prize, and live on thee. "Even here some trees are
"barren: some plants wither away: the unfriendly
"blast, or the devouring worm hath done this."

Alas, what havoc, blasting temptation, and corrupting lust, have made in my soul ! Ah, my barrenness ! my witheredness ! "the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously." "Where is the fruit of "yonder tall tree, whose leaves are so large and "fresh ?" Where, ye professors, that talk big, and show zealous, where is your fruit ? Jesus doth not ask you what you say, but what you do, more than others.

"Yonder corner brings forth nothing but nettles "and hemlock : never did I observe so foul ground "in the open field." Naughty professors in the church are the worst of men ; and the naughtiness of a saint is the worst sin. "Neglect to weed a "garden one year, will perhaps require six years "labour to cleanse it." How short a while's neglect of watchfulness against, and of diligent curbing of inward lusts, is like to give me my hands full of unpleasant work while I live. "But where will "be the beauty, the fragrancy of this garden, a few "months hence ?" And where, O transitory world, will thy comeliness, thy enjoyments, in a little, be ? When I am in the jaws of death, before the tribunal, or fixed in the eternal state, where shall these things be ? they may sting me : none of them will, or can speak one word to comfort or relieve me. Cause, my soul, an enduring substance ; count all things below vanity and vexation of spirit ; let me now esteem the things of this life as I shall do hereafter.

"What a countless number of trees are in this "adjacent wood !" So many memorials of my sinning, and of my Saviour's suffering, by a tree : let my eye affect mine heart : did not Jesus bear my sin

in his own body on the tree ? “ Not the gardener, “ but God planted this wood. God made us : not “ we ourselves ; he made of one blood all nations. “ None of these trees bear fruit but for human use.” And what millions of men are but cumberers of God’s earth, and reserved for eternal woe ? Alas, how many barren inclinations, thoughts, words, and deeds, and worse than barren, are with me ! Ah, what apples of Sodom !—sour grapes ! and fruit for myself !—“ After application to divers purposes, “ are not these trees apt to end in the furnace ?” And, after God hath performed his pleasure with them, are not millions of men like to inhabit devouring fire, and to dwell with everlasting burnings ? Lord, is it I ? or hast thou plucked me as a brand out of the burning ? “ No doubt, this wood is the “ habitation of serpents, and other noxious beasts.” And is not our polluted earth replenished with wicked and unreasonable men ? Is not my heart the habitation of every foulspirit, and hateful lust ? But thrice blessed new covenant of peace, which secures the passing of the evil beasts out of the land ; and my dwelling safely in the wilderness, and sleeping in the woods. In the faith of it, I will lay me down in peace, and take quiet sleep ; for the Lord sustaineth me.

“ What thousands of birds here singing their “ Maker’s praise !” And shall the tongues of men be mute ! shall the tongues of men be prostituted to trifles, to blasphemy, reproach, and lewdness ? Ah how often, in their conversation, so rambling, that it is hard to say what is talked of, or what speaks least to the purpose ? “ But why our birds more melodious than

“those of warmer countries, whose feathers are more beautiful?” The more affliction I endure, and the less favor I enjoy from the world, let me sing, let me rejoice the more sweetly in the God of my salvation. “But would not Philomela’s sweet ‘serenade, amidst the horrors of night, excel these ‘tribes’ diurnal song?” Strive, strive, my soul, to make thy songs by night, outvie the prosperous mirth of a carnal world; but never imitate this proud nightingale, in being a voice, and scarce any thing else; too, too many professed Christians are such.

“Yonder is a company of hunters on the chase.” Let me take pleasure to see the whole animal creation alive and happy: let me never rejoice in the falsely sportive, the barbarous game of death: let me never joy at anguish, or delight in blood: such a temper, brutes’ horrid bosom never knew.—What is this earth but a circling haunt of noisy men, pursuing, and pursued, till death, the mighty hunter, catch them all? till their highest station end in, “here he lies; and dust to dust,” conclude the race. “It is not the hurtful fox, or prowling wolf, but the timorous hare, or harmless roe, which these hunters are in chase of.” Alas, it is the harmless and good who are ordinarily run down in this world.—May endless felicity be my chase; may my soul follow hard after God. Be it my care to hunt out the hurtful foxes and ravenous wolves of corruption from my heart, and from the church of Christ. “Why doth one animal seek the destruction of another?” Sin, thou mother of mischief, how hast thou enraged, and armed the creation of God, every

one against his neighbour ! and, which is infinitely worse, made men outrageous haters of their Maker ! Vile incendiary, may I ever seek thy life : never can I be too severe on thee ; may I take thy tender little ones, and dash them to pieces. “ Here the hunted hare, for her safety, mingles with the browsing flock.” My soul, when Satan hunts thee, go forth by the footsteps of Jesus’ flock ; feed thy kids, thy tender graces beside the shepherd’s tents : so shalt thou be in safety ; a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come near thee ; only with thine eyes thou shalt behold the reward of the wicked ; for thou hast made the Lord thy refuge, even the Most High thy habitation. “ How I pity yonder stag ! hard pursued, he sweeps the forest, bursts the thicket, pants for the stream, stands at bay with trickling tears ; groans with anguish while the blood-hounds mark his sides with gore.” And wilt not thou, Lord, pity my soul ? How hard pursued by Satan and his agents ! how mangled and torn ! how mournful ! how my heart faints and fails ! how I pant for God ! Lord, carest thou not that I perish ? “ More game being started, the hounds are at a loss which to follow.” My soul, never pursue too many objects at once : attempt not to follow and serve both God and mammon ; never be cumbered about many things, lest thy labour be all thy reward, but choose the one thing needful ; this let me seek and desire to obtain. “ How often would the sagacious hound lose his game, were it not for the scent she leaves behind !” And is it not the scent of my corruption that gives Satan, and the world, such advantage

against me? Were it not for this, they should seek me and not find me. "How odd to see great men "hazarding their lives, furiously riding over ditches "and rocks, to pursue a puny hare!" What madness for men to hazard their immortal soul, in the furious chase of momentary pleasures, empty honours and unsubstantial gain:—Ah, how our senses cast a thousand clouds on our unenlightened minds, and leave them doubly blind! what madness to flutter on, from vanity to vice, till death blow us off the stage, and oblivion strikes us from the book of life. "How often a tiresome hunting procures but "an insignificant roast." Let me hunt after created comforts as I will, what a puny portion shall they be, in the day of trouble, of death, or of judgment! Why then, my soul, wilt thou set thine heart upon that which is not?—Lord, shall not I hope that, after all Satan's hunting for me, nothing shall be his of me at last? The God of peace shall bruise him under my feet shortly.

"Some months hence will yonder fowler spread "his net, though not in the sight of the bird." Lord, free my soul from the snares which Satan and his agents always lay for me: give me spiritual knowledge to discern, and wisdom to avoid them. "Just "now yonder youth hath shot two birds that were "fighting in the air, now the carcasses of the fierce "disputants lie quietly together." How mournful that some saints will not live peaceably with their fellows, till Satan deprive them of their liveliness and zeal, or death bereave them of their life!

"Passing this village, I hear the sound of music "and dancing: it seems there is a penny wedding

“here : marriages and deaths are the chief of coun-
“try news.” Perhaps these same musicians and
dancers are, by the thread of life, hanging over eter-
nal fire, and dancing into endless ruin : to love-en-
livened cheeks, sunny features, enrapturing eyes—how
often dark looks succeed, suffused and glaring with
eternal flames ! Ah ! how often are marriages but
scenes of woe ? how often are estates and lusts rather
than persons and affections, united together ? Why
are men so mad in such important concerns, as never
once to consult God ? why so thoughtless in this porch
of death ? why so mean, as to beg the price of their
first dinner from their neighbours around ? But am
I married to Christ ? hath his infinite fairness won
my heart ? Then let my soul leap and rejoice, for the
marriage of the Lamb is come, and he himself hath
made me ready.

“Now the clouds gather : I wish a rainy de-
“luge may not overtake me.” Clouds and darkness,
my Lord, are round about thee ; but justice and judg-
ment the habitation of thy throne. Black clouds of
dark providence, and awful majesty, are thy tremen-
dous robe ; but the rainbow of the new covenant is
ever round about thine head,—is the perpetual ob-
ject of thine attention. Often thick clouds of guilt hide
thy face, and threaten a deluge of wrath to my soul ;
but for thy name’s sake, blot out my transgressions
as a thick cloud, and let me hear a sound of an
abundance of gospel rain, that I, that thousands,
may revive as the corn, and grow as the lily. “Now
“still horror reigns : a dreary twilight hovers
“round : yonder the Thunderer holds his black ma-
“jestic throne : from cloud to cloud the noisy roar,

“and rending lightnings rage: dread sinks the feathered nations to the ground: terror makes the flocks and herds to quake; trembling seizeth the sons and daughters of folly.” It is the voice of my beloved; behold he cometh: it is the voice of him who groaned, who died on Calvary for me! it is the low whisper of my God.—If this spread terror upon creation, and make the wilderness to quake, of whom shall I be afraid? Fear God, my soul; and fearing him, fear nothing but sin.—But why, mortals, do you so exceedingly fear and tremble? why not rather make the Thunderer your friend, by hearing and believing the joyful sound of his gospel? To you is the word of this all-sufficient, all-suited salvation sent. To you, sons and daughters of men, it is offered, without money, and without price. If you refuse this Saviour, how will you stand before him as your Judge? If these momentary flashes dismay you, what horror must seize you, when he comes with a fire burning before him, and a tempest round about him! If rattling clouds affright you, how can you bear the ten-fold more tremendous sentence, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels?” “What rainy torrents now descend! how yonder brook, swelled to a river, pours along; resistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes! with triple force, rapid and deep, between the meeting hills it bursts its way.” What awful brook of woe did Jesus wade, did Jesus drink, that he might lift up his head on high; and that I, with him, might for ever drink of the blessed river of life! What swelling brooks of tribulation may be in my way to the kingdom!

"Now the thunder tempest is ceased : how still
"the breeze ! how clear the cloudless sky ! how
"deeply tinged with her peculiar blue ! how swelled
"immense ! how gay the radiant sun ! how calm
"the gilded earth." Trouble and "sorrow may
endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning :"
nay, but for a moment lasts his wrath. Thrice
happy period, when the days of my fears, and of my
mourning, shall be ended ; how abundant my peace !
how cloudless my sky ! how sweet, how immense
my prospect ! how clear my unsetting sun, my God
my glory !

"What a charming alley have I got into ! how
"extensive and fair my prospect ! a soft way, a
"purling stream, a refreshful shade, concur to my
"pleasure." Think, my soul, what a charming
path, a glorious prospect, Jesus cut through the
shades of death, of hell, for me : in his death I see
the price, in his life I see the path, in his ascension
I see the proof, of my eternal bliss : truly, his ways
are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace.
Here I walk in Christ, under the shadow of the tree
of life, and beside the still waters of his word and
influence. Quickly I hope to walk with the Lamb in
white, and to follow him unto fountains of living
water. "Alas ! robbers have seized me, taken
"my money and watch." Truly, he that trusteth
to this earth is a fool ! never is danger nearer, than
when all things seem to smile upon us : prosperity,
like a comet, threatens as it shines, and blazeth far
and wide. "However, blessed be the Lord, they
"have spared my life." The hearts of wicked men
are in his hand, as the rivers of water. Alas, how

often have Satan, the world and my lusts, robbed me of my comfort! my watchfulness! and almost all my grace! But rejoice, my soul, they cannot rob me of my Christ, my God, my glory.

"This farm on the left is occupied by an indolent drunkard: it is quite out of order: its hedges are broken down; nettles, briars, tares, with thousands of other noxious weeds, cover the fields: the houses are ruinous." With grief and shame let me view this humbling picture of myself. Alas, how have my care and pleasure, my sloth in the spring-tide of opportunity, deformed, corrupted, and ruined me! how have I exposed myself to temptation! how do sinful weeds surmount and choke my growing grace! Amidst spiritual storms, and chilling cold, how uncomfortable is my inward life! "But this farm on the right is managed by a most skilful and active husbandman." Let me learn his ways, and be wise unto salvation. "How close, how skilfully clipped and slashed are his hedges!" Let me keep my heart with all diligence, and take heed to my ways. "How straight his ridges, and clear his water-furrows." Lord, make thou thy way straight before my face; let integrity and truth still preserve me: keep me in thy fear all the day long, and enable me to do every duty in its due order and season. Let never envy, or other lust, settle in, sour, or mar the spiritual fruitfulness of my heart. "This plentiful, thick, and even crop, attests the field hath been well ploughed, and sufficiently sown." O Jesus, let an abundant measure of gospel-holiness evince, that thou hast dealt bountifully with me; hast thoroughly ploughed my heart

with gracious influence, and plentifully sown it with the good seed of thy word. "It is the field that is "but moderately fat, which produces the best crop." Lord, that my grace may signally thrive, "give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me." "By dunging, liming, resting or fallowing, decayed fields are restored to their vigour." And by frequent influences from above; by shedding abroad his love in my heart; and enabling me to act faith in his covenant, promise, blood, power, and grace, doth Jesus restore my soul again. "Yonder spot the husbandman's toil cannot "make fertile." Alas, how many professors cannot be made fruitful by the most signal external care of Heaven! often rained upon by divine ordinances, common influences, and awakening providences; yet they bring forth only briers and thorns of wicked works. These are nigh unto cursing, and their end is to be burned. "How astonishing to see these "multitudes of corn stalks spring from grains which "died under the clod!" But much more astonishing, to behold a Saviour's death issuing in the conversion of the Gentile world, and in the countless blessings, and everlasting glory of sinful men. "To "what danger from fowls, frost, drought, mildew, "wind, or rain, is the crop exposed between seed-time and harvest!" What a prodigy of divine wisdom, power, and love, is the perseverance and perfection of the saints, who are exposed to dangers unnumbered, from corruptions, temptations, and troubles! "How quickly will these corns be ripe!" And shortly shall God cut down all men as ripe, either for heaven or hell. "What servile crowds la-

“bout in this field; their master is not one that withholdeth more than is meet.” What abundant gifts; what numerous officers, prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, hath Jesus, the liberal Jesus, giving for the edifying of his body the church! “This hay hath been just ricked before the shower.” The prudent man foreseeeth the evil, and hideth himself: and often, often doth God take away the righteous from the evil to come. “How well this man looketh to the state of his flocks! some cattle he works; others he feeds to the slaughter; frequently he counts them, that none be lost.” O the much more abundant care of Jesus Christ toward his people! he nourisheth them in his green pastures; according to their strength he distributes their work; he counts them every one; nor can he lose any. But the hypocrites in his church, he feeds, he fattens to the slaughter of everlasting misery. “But are these tares in this fruitful field? how like to the good wheat!” In the best state of the militant church, hypocritical tares mingle with the saints: and to what high semblance of holiness may they attain! Lord, search me and try me, that I may neither deceive, nor be deceived. “No doubt, this man hath, and carefully preserves, a distinct lease of this farm.” Live not, my soul, a moment depending on the mere patience of God: know always in whom thou hast believed; that the Lord is thy God: tremble to sit down, or rise up, without clear views of thy interest in thy blessed lease, the new covenant of peace that shall never be broken: hide this in thine heart, that it may be thy comfort in affliction. “No doubt he lays up wealth

"for his children." Lay up, my soul, stores of earnest prayer, and leave full confession of truth, for my seed : let not me, with most, be more deeply concerned for the happiness of my cattle, than for the everlasting felicity of my children.

"How difficult is it to command yonder fed horse!" In our prosperity, how readily we wax wanton against God, despise and abuse the riches of his goodness ! "Why is this cow clogged ? why her horns tipped with wood ? she has strayed ; she inclines to gore." Woes me ! so must God clog me with weights of trouble, that I may not wander from him ; and restrain the horn of my power from doing mischief.

"What numbers of grasshoppers leap and buz under this hedge ? but their summer-idleness shall quickly issue in winter's death." What multitudes of men flutter and make a noise in their youth, and their prosperity ; and in a moment go down to the grave ! How many live in doing they know not what ! Lord is it I, of all my race, who live least to the purpose ? "How vain it would be for me to alight and chastise these insects for their humming noise ! let them alone a few weeks, they will die of their own accord." If I am disturbed with noisy reproach, let me have patience ; and live so as none may believe it ; it will quickly die of its own accord : let me comfort myself with this, that the best are often most slandered ; even as the best fruit is most picked by the birds. "Where now the glow-worms, which on every hedge lighted upon their gem, and through the dark and moving radiance twinkled ?" When Jesus lifteth up his

countenance ; when my sun shall go no more down ; where will you glow-worms of carnal diversions, self-righteousness, and created comforts, you shiners in the dark, be ?

“How yonder bird flies to the bush for shelter “from the bloody hawk!” When I am pursued by the law or justice of God, by mine own conscience, or by Satan or the world ; Lord Jesus, I flee to thee to cover me : and him that cometh unto thee, thou wilt in no wise cast out ; nor wilt thou bewray that one wandereth. For ever let my fugitive soul dwell with thee. “Were yonder hawk dead, how gladly “would the little tenant of the sky chirp over him!” So do men rejoice at the death of tyrants and mischievous persons. So, my soul, so, all ye ransomed, rejoice over the slaughter of our spiritual foes on Jesus’ cross. So we rejoice over their destruction in our person. “These sparrows are less melodious, “but better food than other puny tribes of air.” Seldom are the most noisy and talkative professors, the most gracious and useful members of the church. Choose, my soul, the part of the sparrow : and think how these “birds of the air have nests ; but the Son of man had not where to lay his head ;” that I might rest in God, rest in glory “incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.” Never mention the wide flights of these birds, to provide nourishment for their young ; but mention the love-flights, the travels of Jesus, to provide food for me. Let me hunger and thirst for God, the living God.—Open my mouth wide, that he may fill it.

“On yonder field, cultivated to the highest, stalks “the ravenous fox : perhaps this hedge is his lodg-

“ing.” Ah, how foxes of corruption lodged in the best heart! and foxes of naughty teachers in the best managed church! “How yonder child hurts himself by pursuing a butterfly!” Alas, how many ruin their soul, by following a worthless, a painted nothing!

“Here is a magnificent palace: let me enter, and behold her glories: how superb the chambers! how costly the furniture! how happy the owner!” Nay, “blessed is the man whose God is the Lord.” If earth can afford such grandeur; what must be the glory of my house not made with hands? At what unbounded expense has Jesus furnished it for me? “Here is the old ruinous castle, where the noble family once lived.” Blessed Redeemer, in what ruinous state didst thou reside, that I might for ever dwell in God! how graciously hast thou translated me from the ruined covenant of works, that habitation of divine wrath, of devils, and every thing doleful;—and lodged me in the new-covenant building of mercy, that shall never be demolished! “But why do great men so often make alterations in their houses, their inclosures, &c.” It shows the unsettled vanity of our minds, and the unsatisfactoriness of all created things. Yet ponder, my soul, how the wisdom of God appears, in making great men’s fancies the means of procuring subsistence to the poor and laborious. “But what shall I think of this desolation?” Sin is the cause: perhaps this ruined structure was built with blood, or purchased with dishonest gain: perhaps here was murdered the poor innocent: here men wallowed in drunkenness and whoredom; here dwelt the slaves of appetite.

here voluptuousness shed her poisonous bane ; here, amidst perfumes, oils, wine, and wanton hours, in vain repentance reared her sneaky crest : mad men ran on in sin. How often these stones witnessed the reproachful tearing of their Maker's name ! There the tables were filled with vomit, and defiled with cards and dice : now thorns and nettles cover the face of it ; while, perhaps, the gay criminals, which once possessed it, wallow in the floods of wrath, and roar amidst devouring fire. " Here nightly " mourns the owl, crawls the toad, and serpents " hiss." Ah, how lusts swarm, infernal serpents hiss, amidst the unregenerate, the deserted heart ! how corruptions abound, and false teachers hiss, amidst a deserted, a disordered, church ! " But why " should these doleful creatures haunt the obscene " shades and rugged ruins, rather than a stately " mansion ? " Why do men cleave to the broken covenant, rather than to the new ? why cleave to corrupt courses and companions, to earthly rubbish, and turn their back on heaven ?

" Now I approach this rising hill." O to approach the heavenly vale of bliss, the softly swelling hills, on which the power of great salvation buds, and joys to see the wonders of our God. " Here the " shepherds feed their flock." To shepherds tending their charge was the Saviour's birth proclaimed ; " Fear not (said the heavenly messenger) behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people ; for unto you is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." " Yonder browse the " daring goats ; they climb the steep, and hang on " the almost perpendicular rock : serpents, and poi-

“sonous weeds, are part of their meal; but how
“wholesome and medicinal is their milk.” O the
proud ascents! the dangerous paths of wicked men!
How wonderfully doth God make the worst of men
and things useful to edify his church! But marvel
most, my soul, that God made that Jesus, the he-
goat, bear my sins; was made a sin-offering for me.
“How pleasantly do these newly washed and shorn
“flocks feed together!—When lately of their robes
“bereft by man, their needy all-depending master,
“how meek, how patient the mild creatures lay!”
How pleasant to see brethren dwell together in unity!
to behold the saints feeding, or even meekly suffering
together with Christ! How pleasant to see them shin-
ing in the beauties of holiness! But ravishing beyond
measure, to behold them at last fully washed, and
jointly feeding on the mountains of spices! “Alas, how
“yonder sheep runs to a sweet but rotting pasture!”
How often do you, flocks of God, forsake the whole-
some pasture of truth! and follow the corrupting
inventions of men, and the things of the present life!
O the rottenness, the rottenness of your heart!
“How fast others follow to the same rot-grass!”
Ah, the hurt, the danger of bad example! Woes me!
what numbers have I seduced from God, by my car-
nal, by my lifeless pattern! O that he would trans-
port me, where there is neither rotting food, rotten
heart, nor bad precedent. “How furiously yonder
“rams beat their foreheads against their fellows!
“what mad skirmish this?” Alas, how often heady,
high-minded professors abuse themselves, and dis-
turb the church with their furious disputes! Too
long, my soul, hast thou dwelt with them that hate

peace. Lord, let me never be a man of strife and contention ; let me hate the dust that fierce disputers raise, and lose the mind in a wild maze of thought. "Lately every lamb here knew his mother, "and she him ; but now it is otherwise : how quickly "are they weaned ?" So, my soul, readily forget father, mother, and all beside Christ ; but never, never, never forget him.—Thrice blessed Redeemer, thou knowest those who are thine ; thy sheep know thy voice, and follow thee. O how he smells out our weakest grace ; and knows our stammering tongue ! May I, by spiritual instinct, discern his voice from the voice of a stranger ; and smell the smell of his garments of righteousness and truth, which are as a field that the Lord hath blessed. "Yonder is the "shepherd with a weakling on his shoulder, that "hath either strayed, or lagged behind." How often have I gone astray like a lost sheep ?—Jesus sought me out, among mountains of guilt and vanity : he found me weak, worthless, and polluted ; he laid me on his shoulders of power and grace ; hitherto he hath borne and carried ; and even to old age he is the same ; he will bear, and he will carry, and he will deliver me.

"Hail, happy shepherds, far removed from the "bustle of a noisy world !" What sweet haunts of meditation, what blissful closets for prayer, you enjoy ! What lively emblems of a Redeemer you always see ! Bulls, calves, sheep, lambs, rivers, rocks, fountains, shrubs, and all around, are full of him ; the glory of your race. Why may not I here taste a shepherd's felicity ? why not improve this pasture of flocks into a green pasture for my soul ?

“Here the junipers grow out of the dry earth, and
“bear fruit divers months.” In this humble birth,
Jesus grew as a root, out of dry ground, bears pre-
cious fruit every month: he is a present aid, a present
remedy, a present comfort, in every time and case.
“Yonder is a large heap of stones.” If I should hold
my peace; if I should cease to praise my Redeemer,
these should immediately cry out: nay, methinks,
they just now thus address my conscience; Build on
Jesus the corner-stone, chosen of God, and precious:
come daily to him as a living stone; be built upon
him, as a lively stone. Consider what manner of
heart thou hast: apply Jesus’ blood to soften, and dis-
solve it. “Yonder rocks, how steep their ascent!
“how towering their height! how protecting their
“shade! how efficacious their herbs! how plenti-
“ful their springs! yet have they not been rent with
“an earthquake or thunderbolt!” Great Rock of
Ages, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
if I forget thee: how lofty, how firm, the unchange-
able I Am! yet how smitten my Moses’ fiery law!
how rent my thunderbolts of divine wrath! that ri-
vers of living water might gush out for me: medi-
cinal virtue, balm of Gilead, grow up for me: com-
plete safety be afforded me! What time my heart is
overwhelmed, is withered, or plagued, lead me to
this rock, that is higher than I. “How vast yon-
“der wilderness!” Blessed be the Lord that the wil-
derness of the Gentile world blossoms as the rose, and
and brings forth saints and graces, to the glory of
God: and that he hath brought me from the wilder-
ness of my natural state, and of divers dark and per-
plexed cases; and enableth me to go up from the

barren, wild, and dangerous desert of a present world, leaning on my beloved.

“Now I have got to the top of the hill.—While “I was in the valley, this summit appeared to touch “the skies: but being come up, I seem as far from “heaven as before.” How often have I gone up to the high mountains of divine ordinances; expecting near fellowship with God, and eminent foretastes of heaven; and have there been as far from it as ever! —Lord, let every disappointment lead me to thyself: thou wilt not frustrate the expectation of the poor. “Here, how wide my prospect of heaven and earth! “what numerous, what extensive portions of worldly “men do I feed my eyes with the sight of, and “see beyond!” Perhaps this view maketh me as happy as their master: he neither eats, drinks, nor puts on their whole product, more than I: nay, perhaps these are more mine than his; for all things are mine, and I am Christ’s; all things work together for my good: God and all that is his, are mine: be content then, my soul, with such things as thou hast: rejoice, that an archangel’s eye cannot take in the ten thousandth part of thine inheritance: boast thyself, for in Christ thou art become exceeding rich. O to stand on Pisgah’s top, and view the whole fullness of God, secured to me for ever by his oath, covenant, and promise!

“On this high mountain, not to tempt, but to “teach; let not Satan, but a sanctified fancy, show “me all the kingdoms of this world in a moment.” Thou universal history of nations, what are thy scores of volumes, but a lecture of my Saviour’s words; “There is none good but one, and that is God;—

he is kind to the evil and the unjust. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.—Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” What do I find in these many, these learned volumes, but near six thousand years filled up with the vilest provocations, upon man’s side; and with the most astonishing sovereignty, patience, power, mercy, wisdom, and equity, on God’s?—What verifications do I find of the word upon which he hath caused me to hope! How often, Lord, hast thou exalted the very dregs of men to scourge the nations, and then turned them off into destruction! Pride hath ordinarily gone before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.—Division hath been the common ruin of nations and churches!—Seldom did a people much prosper, after they became persecutors and scourges of thy church. On comparing men’s sins with their judgments, how brightly shines the equity of divine providence! Not rarely are the righteous and the sinner, recompensed in the earth.—In awful sovereignty, God withholds the gospel from the bulk of mankind: but let not me, with unconcern, behold them in the way to perdition.—Covet not, my soul, the golden mines, the mountains of spices, the fishery of pearl, the rocks of diamond, nor all the splendid wealth of the jewelry tribe; I am more blessed: I hear, I know the joyful sound of the gospel; the inexhaustible mines of Godhead are my own: Jesus is my spices, my jewels, my diamond, my pearl of great price, my portion, whose price is better than rubies. Through him, what-

ever concerns me is most fine gold! O golden temptations! golden crosses! golden trials! golden troubles; you work for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. "Amidst rich mines, and fertile fields, the inhabitants are often the dupes of slavery, and the soil is soaked with blood." But in Christ I have, at once, unbounded wealth, unhampered liberty, perpetual peace, and absolute safety. What can my soul desire more?

"But let me speak to the different parts of the earth, that they may teach me; and to the various nations, that they may declare unto me.—Ye Portuguese, highly do I applaud the courage by which, sixscore years ago, you regained your freedom from the Spanish yoke; though to England you owe your continued possession of it.—But why remain the distinguished votaries and slaves of Antichrist? Why not balance the loss of your Indian trade, with receiving the gospel of Christ?" Hail, my soul, it is to Jesus I owe the beginning, progress, and continuance of my liberty.—He was slain, and has redeemed me to God by his blood; the Son having made me free, I am free indeed. Let me no more serve divers lusts; and let me balance every loss, by taking possession of the fulness of God.

"Proud Spain, unhappy scene of bloody war; what hosts of Celts, Carthaginians, Romans, Goths, Vandals, Suevi, and Moors, have conflicted on thy plains, and dunged thy fields with their carcasses! How madly you invited the Moors, and permitted them, in eighty years, so to establish themselves, as eight hundred of bloody warfare could not ex-

“pel them !” What a theatre of strife is my heart ? what is to be seen in her but a company of two armies ? what in the church but “ Michael and his angels, fighting with the devil and his angels.”—Alas ! why have I admitted temptations, whose baleful fruits my whole life will never undo ? why have church guardians admitted corruptions, which ages cannot purge out ? “ Ye Spaniards, why are ye “ poor amidst wealth ? why possess money without “ activity ? Are your riches cursed because purchased with treachery and blood ?—Flee, flee to “ Jesus’ atonement, not to Antichrist’s abominations, “ for the removal of your guilt.” May Christ be my treasure : let me be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord ; let my outward wealth be purchased with his blessing, which addeth no sorrow to it.

“ Ye French, long famed for liberty, levity, and “ contention ; united under one sovereign, you lost “ your freedom.” Too long, Lord, hath thy militant church been an open scene of changes, lightness, and division. May her members at last unite under thee, their own head ; so shall they regain, not lose, their true liberty.—Alas, how many professed members, by union under Popes and Bishops, entangle themselves in a yoke of bondage ! “ What “ an empty, though high-sounding title, hath the “ British monarch to the French kingdom !” While without Christ, our claim to every outward enjoyment is equally unsubstantial.

“ Ancient monarchy of Navarre, how art thou “ swallowed up ! Though worth nothing to either, “ both France and Spain claim thy sovereignty.”

Sublunary world, how empty a portion art thou to these that swallow thee up, strive about, and claim thee as their all!

“Renowned Italy, long the honoured seat of the Roman empire; long the holy seat of a famous church: but how fallen from heaven! how degenerated into the residence of the Antichristian beast!—Amidst vast pretences to learning, how drowned in ignorance! amidst high pretences to sanctity, how dissolved into profaneness! amidst a fruitful soil, how blasted! how idled into barrenness! how often a field of blood, a scene of deceit!” How like to this is every apostate from God!

“Once powerful Republics of Venice, Genoa, Pisa, and Lucca; how is your glory withered! your merchandize decayed! and your gainful traffic conveyed into other channels!” Be my trade with the Levant, the East Indies of heaven! so shall it never decay, never be turned into any channel but the new covenant; which “is all my salvation, and all my desire, though he make it not to grow.”

“Cold, rocky, barren, throat-swelling Alps.” How like my cold, my hard, my barren, frozen, tuneless heart. “But amidst these hills God prepared a place for his church, during the tyranny of Antichrist; nor could all the fraud or violence of Savoy’s bloody race extirpate her.” Is any thing too hard for the Lord? If earth, deserts, or rocks, can help the woman, let me never despair of his protection. “Geneva, amidst thy weakness, how marvellously preserved in the jaws of thine enemies, the dukes of Savoy, and kings of France!”

Ye saints, how are you kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation! how preserved as in the paw of the lion! You are all in Jesus' hand: he keeps you as the apple of his eye.

"Bold Switzers, bravely you threw off the Austrian yoke: but why unnaturally make war your business? why hire yourselves to murder brethren? why hazard your life, your soul, for pitiful gain?" Alas, let me remember my faults: what bloody campaigns against God have I served, under Satan, for no reward at all!

"Afflicted Germany, how often torn with murderous war! how often deluged with torrents of blood! how often fattened with the carcasses of the slain! how often hath thy children torn out thy bowels, and invited thine adversaries into thy bosom! How dearly purchased, how deeply dipt in blood were thy pacifications of Passua, Nimeguen, Ryswick, and Aix-la-Chapelle! but chiefly thy Westphalian treaty! Did this cost eighteen years of war to the daring Swedes? twenty-eight to the German race?" O Zion, how hast thou been always afflicted, and tossed with tempest! how have hypocrites and heretics torn thy bowels! how often have they called in thy open adversaries to afflict thee!—And have not my inward lusts been mine especial pest? how often have they invited Satan to ruin and molest me!—And, O blessed new covenant treaty of peace, which cannot be broken! built up with blood divine!

"You Austrian Low Countries, how well you began to shake off your slavish yoke! who did hinder you to procure your liberty, and obey

quickly ashamed? why proud of a hell of sinfulness and spiritual plagues?

“Poland, thy fields are fertile, thy nobles haughty, thy kings contemned, thy peasants oppressed, thy travellers ill provided, and thy frontiers often invaded. How like our present world! how like our corrupt church! Here, especially amidst wealth and power, how is Jesus contemned! souls enslaved to lusts, and to ambitious men! pilgrims for glory ill used! men unsatisfied! unhappy amidst plenty! their enjoyments being invaded by a curse; and their hearts by the prince of the power of the air.

“Hungary, how often the wretched seat of war betwixt Antichristians and infidel Turks? how often hast thou changed thy masters? why, after so numerous struggles for religion and liberty, submit to the Austrian yoke, and almost worn out the Protestant name?” Alas, what a theatre of strife hath been, and is, the visible church! how tamely do most of her professed members submit to Satan’s slavery! how is practical Christianity expelled from the most! What a scene of war is my heart! how there, even lusts strive one with another! Ah, how I yield! grow weary and weak-handed! how little of Christ is with me?

“Great Russia, long the habitation of brutish ignorance, and bloody cruelty; long the contempt of nations, till Peter the Great extended thy limits, civilized thy manners, and enhanced thy reputation.” Such shall be the fate of my soul; such the fate of the Christian church: our beginning was base and small, but our latter end shall be glo-

tions. Great Jesus shall arise, scatter our enemies, enlarge our conquests, reform our manners, increase our celestial trade ; and reveal unto us the abundance of peace and truth.

“ You Mengrehians, Circassians, and Georgians, half angels in comeliness, mostly Christians in name, brutes in ignorance, demons in barbarity and in devotion, witness your mutual broils ; your murder of children, and selling them to the infidels around ; your building of churches on high distant rocks, almost only to be looked at.” Alas, how many Christians so called, are destitute of the knowledge of God ! how void of natural affection ! how negligent of devotion ! how they spiritually sell themselves and their prosperity into the hand of Satan, to work wickedness ! and use churches and Bibles as things chiefly to be gazed at.

“ Wild and wide Tartary, conqueror of nations, how have thy savage brood, Goths, Huns, Scythians, Seljaks, Mungals, Manchews, Chorasmians, Turkmans, and Othmans, subdued Europe and Asia, with the north part of Africa ! and perhaps from thee was first peopled the American world. What shocking desolations you have spread through most of the earth, particularly among the gospel-despisers of Europe ?” O how plainly God has enlarged Japheth ; made him to dwell in the tents of Shem : and given him Canaan to be his servant ! how he hath exalted the low trees, the basest of men ; and brought down the high trees, the lofty and most famous of nations ! But thrice blessed new covenant, where there is neither Barbarian nor Scythian, but Christ is all and in all. “ In Tartary’s barren soil,

“grow the medicinal jingseng, and the vegetable
 “lamb.” In the virgin’s womb in our sinful earth,
 grew up the Plant of Renown, whose leaves are for
 the healing of the nations ; the wonderful Lamb of
 God ; God made manifest in the flesh ; and how of-
 ten has my soul found him in the wildest deserts of
 trouble !

“Vile Lamas of Tibet, why pretend to be gods
 “incarnate ? whence so many broken hints of an in-
 “carnate deity among the nations of the East ? have
 “they heard a confused report concerning Jesus’
 “birth, and no more ?” Alas, how many Christians
 in name are scarce better versed in this mystery
 of godliness ? and how many put themselves in the
 Saviour’s place ? Are the self-righteous man, and
 the Roman Pope, a whit less wicked than the blas-
 phemous Lama ? Are the legal, the Arminian
 preachers, who extol our own righteousness and
 strength, a whit less deceivers than they who zeal-
 ously preach up the divinity of the Lamas of Ti-
 ber ?

“Proud Japan, what avails thy three thousand
 “years of royalty, the glory of thine arts, the immen-
 “sity of thy wealth, and thy unconquered valour,
 “amidst deep slavery, and while Jesus’ sweet and
 “enriching name is excluded from thy borders ?”—
 How once similar was my heart ? I thought myself
 strong, wise, rich ; increased in goods, and needing
 nothing : while, by want of him, I wanted all ; and
 was poor, wretched, blind, and naked.

“Vain China, near four thousand years hath thy
 “monarchy, under twenty-two different families,
 “maintained herself : numerous millions, indus-

"trious in labour, laden with wealth, and arrayed
 "in silk, replenish thy regions: plentiful is thy
 "coarse water, and her correcting tea. But, alas!
 "what destructive wars have stained thy fields with
 "blood, and filled thy cities with ravage and cruelty!
 "Once the Mungals, now the Manchews, have
 "subjected thee to their yoke.—Thrice wretched
 "paradise! in lacking the Redeemer, thou lackest
 "all." But how glorious is the ancient, the ever-
 lasting, the invincible monarchy of free grace, un-
 der her one Head Christ; of her increase and peace
 there shall be no end: innumerable companies of
 ransomed men: all industrious in imitating his la-
 bour of love, all enriched with the fulness of God,
 all arrayed in the silken robes of imputed righteous-
 ness, are his subjects: her hills of ordinances and
 promises are covered with invaluable blessings.
 Here, not tea, but Jesus, the fruit of the earth,
 sweetens and corrects our bitter waters of adversity.

"Group of Indian tribes from eastern ocean to
 "Persian sea, why are you poor amidst plenty? un-
 "happy amidst finery? why the willing slaves of
 "brutish idolatry? or the deluded dupes of the Ma-
 "hometan impostor?" Renounce your Wistna, your
 Brama, Sommonocodom, and the residue of your
 fancied deities; reject your barbarous rites, and Ara-
 bian frauds: receive Jesus, embrace his gospel-
 light, which leads to heaven; his law, his liberty,
 which alone sustain the dignity of men; and that
 can make you wise unto salvation, soldiers of JEHO-
 VAH, merchants of heaven, and priests unto our God:
 let your dwelling be in the warm climate, the fertile
 soil of the new covenant, on the banks of the south

ocean of redeeming love : not then should Indus, Ganges, and lesser rivers almost innumerable, so fertilize your fields, as Jesus your "place of broad rivers, wherein go no gallies with oars, nor gallant ships pass thereby;" should refresh, cleanse, and purify your soul. "But why do not I think with horror, of the shocking villany and murder by which the Britons and Dutch carry on their East-India trade?" Can we do these things and be delivered? What if the spark from East-India, which hath kindled this ruinous war, should consume us, root and branch? Alas! that men, especially naughty Christians, will stick at nothing to procure gain, and yet care nothing to receive Christ and his fullness!

"Wide Persia, and you fruitful fields, washed by the streams of Hiddekel and Euphrates: horrid and often repeated scenes of pride, of changes, guilt, and blood! in what abject ruins now lie your once famed Ninevah, Babylon, Persepolis, Rey!" Sin, that enemy, hath done this:—expect trouble, my soul, in the fatness of this earth: here roses grow on thorns, and honey wears a sting: let not the catastrophe of cities so affect me as mankind's fall; as Calvary's more shocking scene: Who would have suspected, that the adversary could have brought JEHOVAH to the dust of death? buried him in ruins and in blood! May I determine "to know nothing but Christ and him crucified!"

"Armenia, perhaps the harbour of the patriarch's ark, how near the sun! and yet how seldom fully thawed thy frigid plains, or towering heights!" How often am I near Jesus Christ in

ordinances ! and yet, even in the summer-tides of opportunity, how frozen my heart !

“ But ask, where now the Assyrians, the Chaldeans, Persians, Greeks, Parthians, Romans, Saracens, Seljaks, Tartars, and Turkmans, who by turns caused their terror in those eastern climes !” They are fallen and shall not arise : so falls the whole pride of human glory ! what mournful hints do ruined heaps, and funerals of kings and kingdoms, suggest ! beggars may sport with awful ashes in the grave, and tread the Cæsars in the dirt : bright and lasting bliss below is all romance and dream : celestial pleasures only rise and flow in an eternal tide. Let me be as mount Zion, which can never be moved ; let never the rise and fall of nations so affect my soul, as those of my incarnate God : how sad the sound of his breaking heart-strings ! how was the God of the whole earth dissolved ! he “ cried, and gave up the ghost :” but “ the Lord is risen indeed :” he rose with wakened saints, a long triumphant train :—“ Ought not Christ to have suffered, and to enter into his glory !”

“ You Othman Turks, originally the offscouring of men, how hath God, by you, scourged Asia, Africa, and Europe ! and bestowed upon you the fruitful regions, once so famed in the records of heaven ; and of Greece, the most of which your oppression hath more than half desolated !” How, Lord, must thou condemn our earthly wealth, when thou so liberally bestowest it upon men so wicked : and who know so ill how to use it !—And how, you ransomed, hath God raised us up from the dunghill ; given us the goodly heritage of the hosts of na-

tions ; and made us sit with the prince of the kings of the earth ! God forbid that we should abuse our mercies.

“ Arabia, boast no more of thy coffee, thy cinnamon, thy precious spices ; want of water more than countervails the profit : unhealthy are thy hills of frankincense ; the habitations of serpents, visited by few but slaves.” Lord, give me useful things, though I should want rarities ; rather give me Christ, who is both rare and useful. Dwell not, my soul, amidst worldly pleasure, profit, or honour ; there the hellish serpents swarm ; there the climate is unhealthy, proper only for the bondslaves of the old covenant. “ How often the fragrant smell half sickens the mariner, who approacheth the Arabian shore ! ” How often have the near views of glory, of the King in his beauty, sweetly sickened and enraptured my heart ! “ Ye Arabian Ishmaelites, near four thousand years hath your hand been against every man, and every man’s hand against you.—For divers ages, under the name of Saracens, you spread delusion and ravage among multitudes of nations.—Always wonderfully hath God, according to his promise, preserved your liberty, not withstanding every Assyrian, Chaldean, Persian, Grecian, Roman, Tartar, and Turkish, attempt to despoil you of it.” Lord, hast thou, from respect to thy covenant, so preserved a barbarous, a brutish, thievish, and abominable nation ! wilt thou not preserve my weak grace, and make me more than a conqueror, through him that loved me ?

“ Syria, but chiefly you Palestine and Egypt, where is your ancient glory ? your wonted fruit-

“fulness: Are your fields cursed? or are they
“abused? Why, for many ages, become scenes of
“bondage, blood, and desolation?” Quickly, O earth,
shall barrenness and ruin be thy universal fate; thou
and thy works be burnt up. Let me never expect
happiness but in God himself; so shall I never hazard
a disappointment: for “truly in vain is salvation, is
lasting happiness, hoped for from hills, and multi-
tudes of mountains; or from lands flowing with milk
and honey.”

“Africa, wretched theatre of direful monsters,
“british stupidity, vile slavery, base nastiness, hor-
“rid and unnatural lusts, shocking idolatry, hellish
“barbarity!—Are thy inhabitants men? or are they
“mixtures of the devilish and bestial tribes? Most
“of them are stupid heathens; many, once the Ara-
“bian subjects, and still the senseless dupes of Ma-
“homet. How little do the tolerated Christians of
“Egypt, or the authorised of Abyssinia, differ from
“beasts in their ignorance; or fools in their super-
“stition! How stupidly nasty the Hottentots, and
“other nations on the south! What ravaging imps,
“the Galles, Giagas and Imbii, in the heart of the
“country! What unnatural markets of slaves are
“on the west! How extensive and dangerous are
“the dry wastes of Zaara! How confusion and sla-
“very domineer in the empire of Fez and Morocco,
“and in the states of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, on
“the north!” Sin, horrid transformer, how hast
thou changed our God and our glory!—How like
Africa is my heart! her true Christianity is but small
and confused: but ah, what ravaging lusts, want of
natural affection, horrid pollution, barrenness, barba-

rity, blood-guiltiness, and spiritual slavery, am I an awful scene of? Lord, pity Africa; and pity a wretched soul that would be thine.

“ America, long the quiet residence of Satan and
“ his subjects: once horrid scene of Spanish cruelty;
“ but now partly called to the faith of Christ, who is
“ the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of
“ them that are afar off upon the sea; could not
“ your most savage brood forbear to love, to protect him, they imagined, had them figured on his
“ heart?” And can you men murder and trample under foot the Son of God, who hath you from everlasting to everlasting on his heart? My soul, through this gospel-mirror, behold thyself in Jesus’ heart: in his Father’s bosom, in his mother’s womb, in the garden, on the cross, and on the throne; I was, I am always in his heart: can I kill? can I forbear to love the God-man, who hath so loved me, and given himself for me?

“ Polar regions almost unknown; months of darkness, barren fields, and frozen habitations, are your
“ yearly portion.” Alas, what dark ignorance; what months of woe; what distance from the Sun of Righteousness; what barrenness; what frozen indifference about a crucified Redeemer; are in the case and temper of my soul!

“ Isles famed for spices, liberty, or wealth, founded
“ in, and surrounded with the ocean, or almost lost
“ in the heart of it.” Blessed be the Lord, who thought on you in your low estate; for his mercy endureth for ever. May your colonies trust in his Son, and wait for his law.—May I for ever stand on the Rock of Ages; on the sure bottom of divine pur-

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poses and promises ; and let the ocean of redeeming love surround, protect, wash, and fructify all my powers. While I inhabit time, that almost invisible island, thrown up in the ocean of eternal duration, let eternal things be my prospect ; my refreshment ; my all in all.

Having thus surveyed the globe, permit me, Lord, to say, there is none on earth whom I desire besides thee ; separate from thee, all is vanity of vanities ; vanity and vexation of spirit.—But when I view the earth as the theatre of redeeming love, when I see Jesus rejoicing in her habitable parts, and being the confidence and salvation of all the ends of it ; how earth, that offscouring of creation, smiles ! When I view all the providences of God, towards all the nations of the world, in every age, working together to promote the great work of redemption ! When I believe, that all the kingdoms of this world shall quickly become the kingdoms of my Lord, and of his Christ ; how it cheers my heart, and fills my lips with rejoicing ! Let the whole earth his glory fill : let his name be praised from the rising to the setting sun. Amen and Amen.

“But now, declining sun, what unmeasurable tracks
“ of sky hast thou to-day traversed ?” How much more swift, glorious, and majestic, are thy goings, O Sun of Righteousness, whose it is to enlighten every man that cometh into the world ! Let mine eyes be ever fixed on thee ; my heart constantly attracted to thee. Quickly will this sun bid me his diurnal, perhaps “ his last adieu.” So time, so every earthly enjoyment posts away from me : let me not absurdly bid them good morrow, while they bid me good night.

But never shall Jesus make an afternoon to my soul : for ever I shall see him as he is ; for ever I shall gaze on his mid-day brightness ; and with angels bask and melt in his meridian love. " Make haste, my beloved, arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."

" With the utmost caution I must descend this mountain, lest I slip, tumble headlong ; and break bones, or neck." With the utmost care and watchfulness, must I descend from the mount of ordinances.—Ah ! how often, by stumbling into carnal care, vain company, idolizing of frames, or yielding to lusts, immediately after being in the mount with God, have I sadly wounded and bruised my soul !—O that death were come to set all my disjointed bones, and heal all my sores !

" How beautifully do thorns, thistles, and almost every weed, now blossom on this way-side ?" While I enjoy summer-like communion with my God, all nature smiles in my face : unruly reproaches, prickly trials, and temptations, and what many reckon insignificant trifles, afford me pleasant and useful instruction and comfort.

" Here a mighty river stops my course.—Alas, " just now the ferry-boat is gone off !" O the mischief of unnecessary delay, in the concerns of eternity ! But be patient, my soul, under every outward disappointment ! and let the everlasting covenant be thy security against every wrathful event ; take fast hold of her, refuse to let her go ; so shall she keep thee, and promote thee to honour.—Beware of anxious desire of death ; " since there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with a stroke ;" let God, whose I am, and whom I serve, order the time, place, means, and

manner of my decease, as is good in his sight ; let me die in the Lord, and to his honour ; let me depart and be with Christ ; and it is enough.

“ But since I am stopt ; let me refresh myself, “ and be ready against next call ! ” Lord Jesus, plentifully refresh me with thy flesh and blood, that I may die in my full strength ; may I, like my Saviour, triumphantly shout, and then give up the ghost. May I be always ready, because I know not when the Son of man cometh. —

“ Having got a refreshment, let me amuse and “ edify myself with the view of the ships and harbour till the boat be ready. Yonder the old crazy “ vessel is laid up for use ; and just by her is a “ new one upon the dock.” One generation goeth away, and another cometh ;—after divers repairs shall our crazy body be laid up, as useless, in the grave. “ Perhaps this puny yacht may ride out the storm “ that will tear and sink the largest vessel.” How often do weak, humble, and self-denied Christians, more clearly ride out storms of temptation and trouble than some more eminent saints !—Learn, my soul, to be meek and lowly, always depending on Jesus ; so, when I am weak, shall I be strong. “ Here a “ huge vessel unloads her cargo : what stupendous “ burden of Indian goods has she brought home ? ” What rich supplies of grace might the effectual fervent prayer of faith bring from Christ’s fulness into my heart ? But ah, my sloth ! my stupidity ! “ no “ sooner was this vessel built than launched into the “ deep.” No sooner was I naturally born than launched into the sea of a troublesome world : no sooner spiritually born from above, than launched into

a sea of new trouble from Satan, and a wicked heart : no sooner shall I be gloriously born in death, and the resurrection, than launched into eternal depths of perfect felicity.

“ Doubtless this ship has sailed the noisy, inconstant, raging ocean, which foams out his filthiness upon the shore ; preserves his freshness by perpetual motion ; and where leviathan, and his fellow-monsters, play.” Ocean, how like to our earth ! how vast her extent ! how various her inhabitants, and conditions ! how changeable her enjoyments ! how full of monstrous sinners sporting themselves with mischief ! what polluted persons and deeds, she daily foams out into eternity ! how preserved from utter corruptions by the storms of divine judgment !—How like the ocean is my tossed, raging, inconstant heart ! what waves of trouble, what monsters of lusts are to be found there ! how she foams out her shame ! casts forth mire, and dirt, “ evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies !”—Think, my soul, of the ocean of God-head ! O shoreless, unfathomable fulness of perfection and goodness ! in him all things live and move : from him they spring ; and to him they return as their last end.—Think of the height, the depth, the length, the breadth of the love of Christ that passeth knowledge ! sooner could I drink the ocean dry, than all the ransomed millions could exhaust his love !——Think of the ocean of eternity, into which I must enter ! Dread thought ! enter into eternity ! and do I know and care so little about my eternal state !

“ At sea, how carefully was this ship steered by

" the compass ? how skilfully was she tacked about,
 " to have her sheets filled with the gale ?" Let a con-
 science well informed, and awed by the word of God,
 regulate the motions of my life : if I want the sen-
 sible breathings of heaven, let my soul tack about to
 every point of duty and ordinance, till all her powers
 be filled, be stretched with divine influence !—If I
 am becalmed, dead, or lifeless, let me never intoxi-
 cate myself with carnal care, or inactive sloth ; but
 wishfully cry and wait for the promised gale : Awake,
 O north wind of divine influence, and come thou
 south, blow upon my soul, that she may live, and
 move. " How little effect would rowing with oars,
 " or dragging with ropes, have on this high and
 " heavy vessel ? but how easily could she run be-
 " fore a full trade-wind ?" Lord, when thou art
 absent, how little effect has tugging and rowing at
 duty, on my haughty, dull, and heavy heart ?
 But when I get into a fair trade-wind of divine influ-
 ence, how easily, how pleasantly I bear away for Im-
 manuel's land ? how many leagues I run in a mo-
 ment ? O happy, happy, to sail for ever in the Paci-
 fic ocean of redeeming love, before a full, an ever-
 lasting gale of the Holy Ghost !

" Who knows what hardships this ship hath suffer-
 " ed at sea ! how she hath been attacked by pi-
 " rates ! hath sprung leaks ! foundered among
 " waves ! or been dashed on rocks ! Perhaps she was
 " almost wrecked as she entered the harbour : per-
 " haps just now, the mariners admired their unex-
 " pected escape." O the inconceivable distress of
 Jesus' church ! how often hath persecution bestormed
 her : how often hath piratical, carnal, and politic

managers robbed her ; how often have leaks of division sprung in her ; how often hath she been dashed upon the rocks of delusion and error ! In these last times, when just entering the harbour of the millennial state, how is she almost utterly broken and destroyed !——How often have storms from heaven, from earth, from hell, at once attacked me, and striven to swallow me up ?—How often hath devils, and wicked men, attempted to rob me of my joy and grace ? how often have leaks of corruption, the fountains of hellish deep, sprung up in my soul ? how often have I been dashed, all of a sudden, dashed on rocks of perplexity and disappointment ? how lately was I threatened with immediate ruin ? Lord, what a wonder is it that I am brought hitherto ?—Who knows, but while I enter the harbour of everlasting rest, my troubles may be still more severe ? “I have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.” But God hath delivered me ; he doth deliver ; and in him I trust that he will deliver me ; from the belly and from the womb he hath borne, and hath carried ; and he will bear, and carry, and deliver me. “But do not skilful mariners foresee the evil, and “avoid it, or prepare for it ?” Be prudent, my soul ; foresee the evil, and eschew it : avoid every rock of offence ; abstain from every appearance of evil : to prevent thy being tossed to and fro, or cast away, ballast thy mind with grace ; let the word of Christ dwell in the richly ; lower thy sails, be clothed with humility.

“In a few days the * * * * fleet will sail hence.” How many daily launch into eternity ? How many of these into the stormy ocean of divine wrath ?

Dread thought! are thousands just now dropping into hell, and am I so unconcerned? With what awful solemnity shall the whole human race quickly launch forth; the wicked into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal?

“Just now I am called to the boat.” Perhaps, in a little, to my last sickness. “Numbers here offer me their service: it is not me, however, but my money which they regard.” How many for gain, not from love, show kindness to the saints?—But neither for my person nor for my money, but for his name’s sake, doth Jesus offer and give me his service. “When I come to the water side, all the crew crowd about me; but when I go from it, none take notice of me.” When men come into honour, multitudes court their favour: but when they lose it, they are straightway contemned, even of such as were advanced by them. My comfort is, that God shall never leave me, nor forsake me.

“Now I have taken a seat in the boat.” Alarming prelude of my lying down on a death-bed; “When will they put me off, and waft me over to my native country?” Rather, O when shall death waft me over to my truly native country; my desired, my long-desired Father’s house in heaven! “Why tarry the wheels of his chariots? why is he so long a-coming?” “Adieu, friends on shore; perhaps to meet no more in life.” But adieu, my soul, to every earthly enjoyment: but happy! happy! there is no use for adieus between me and my God.

“Now we are set off: no more than a few inches

“ of timber are between us and the deep ; nay, between us and an eternal state : yet so stupid, so wicked, are most of the passengers, that reproof can scarce restrain their blasphemy, and obscene talk.” Alas ! how often do sinners lie on deathbeds, as unconcerned, as wicked, as if no eternity, no danger, no hell, were before them ? “ This blind musician diverts us in our passage.” Lord, open his eyes to see thyself ; and when I “ pass through the valley of the shadow of death,” let the sweet sound of Jesus’ love and promise recreate me : O how it shall refresh and restore my soul !

“ Just the other moment we had a pleasant gale ! but now the wind whistles ; the sea swells ; the billows roar.” How changeable is an earthly condition ? how often God lifts me up, and casteth me down ? Who knows how it may be with my soul in the hour of death ! perhaps first a pleasant gale ; then a fearful storm of temptation and trouble : but, O Jesus, “ the cup which thou gavest me shall I not drink it ? ” Sure I am, my soul is anchored within the veil : let therefore storms blow, how and whence they will, they can but blow me home to my exceeding joy. “ The sea works, and is tempestuous.” Encourage thyself, my soul ; thy Redeemer was cast into the ocean of Almighty wrath, to allay its raging : he, my father and pilot, sits upon the floods : he is in straits a present aid. “ Alas ! now we go to the bottom without recovery :—How cutting to be lost just before the harbour ! ” Ah ! where are now my sweet frames ?—I am unready for death !—Master, save me, I perish !—Ah ! how easy to be

resigned to trials, till they touch us to the quick ? to talk boldly to death at a distance !—But at close grips, it is a serious affair indeed.—Alas ! after a standing profession, and manifold seeming experiences of the grace of God, must I to-night make my bed in hell !—Was it delusion—Must I have my portion with hypocrites ? Comes Belzeebub to drag me to eternal fire !—Stop, my faithless heart : What whisper do I hear ?—It is I, be not afraid : I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save :—Be still, and know that I am God. It is the voice of my beloved ! behold, he cometh, leaping on the mountains of guilt, and skipping on the hills of affliction ! “ How sudden the change : just now, lashed into foam, the fierce conflicting sea swelled her mountain-billows to the clouds ; huge uproar lorded wide ; all nature reeled :—Now nature’s King, who often amidst tempestuous darkness dwells, and who on the fleet, careering, winged winds, walks dreadfully serene,—commands a calm : straight air and sea, and earth, are hushed at once ; immediately we are at land.” “ O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men !” What monuments of God’s preserving kindness are we ! what monuments of sovereign grace, if through much danger, and manifold “ tribulation, we enter into the kingdom of God !”

“ Alarmed with our danger, yonder crowd come to congratulate our escape.—My father and elder brother are among them !” Ravishing period, when JEHOVAH my heavenly Father, Jesus my elder brother, with millions of angels, and spirits of just

men made perfect, shall welcome me from the roaring billows of trouble, and raging floods of death! —Methinks, I hear my enraptured soul saying, “Is not this my Christ! is this HE, whose visage was more marred than any man; and his face more than the sons of men,” for me! Is this HE, whom I saw in a glass darkly, but now face to face:—Once, Lord, I thought never to have seen thy gracious countenance; and lo, thou hast shewed me the Father also, and it sufficeth me! Blessed Lamb, blessed three-one God, art thou mine! wholly mine! for ever mine! What am I, that thou hast brought me hitherto! “Is this the manner of men, O Lord God!”

“Now I am in my father’s house, my clothes changed, my body warm and dry: we have richly supped: I forget my wearisome travel and stormy passage.” O the happiness of my arrival in heaven! Jesus shall strip off my filthy garments of mortality, guilt, and corruption; array me with robes of unspotted holiness and perfect honour; melt and inflame every power of my soul with his love; richly feast me with the fulness of God; and cause me to drink with him the new wine of everlasting joy in his Father’s kingdom. O how shall I drink and remember my misery no more! nay, with what pleasure shall I remember “the light afflictions which wrought for me an exceeding and eternal weight of glory! Then, then, my sun shall no more go down, nor my moon withdraw her shining; and the day of my mourning shall be ended!

“Now I am got into my brother’s closet! what a fine library is here!” But by far too small to

contain the history of what Jesus my elder brother did, doth, and shall do for me : too small to exhaust the substance of that thrice-blessed book, the Bible. " Here is a fine set of classics." These I conversed with in childhood : but now let me put away childish things ; let the writings of the prophets and apostles be the delightful classics of my soul. " Here " is plenty of select plays and romances." Let them study those who have too much time too prepare for eternity ; too much room in their heart for God : are not his real works a thousand times more beautiful, than these creatures of men's fancy !—Alas ! how much of our life is but an empty romance ! a religious shadow without substance !—But is it not a sad defect in our method of education, that God's word is so extruded, and children's minds stuffed with Pagan fooleries, and romantic fancies ? " Here " are whole volumes of controversial tracts." I am too near eternity, to feel much pleasure in the most of those. Alas ! that men would waste their talents, spend their time, and trouble the church, with so many disputes, which appear altogether dry and tasteless in the hour of death :—that they should write on religious disputes, as men in passion, or in jest : and appear to contend for victory more than for truth ; and to seek rather to dishonour their brother, than to honour their God. " Here is a choice " collection of histories ! by Rapin, Rollin, Dupon, " Robertson, Raynal, Mosheim, Universal History," &c. All standing memorials of God's wisdom, power, and goodness, and of the greatness of human guilt. But none like the inspired annals of redeeming love to my heart.—Think, my soul, if, with as much

distinctness, thou canst tell what has passed between God and thee, as this man relates transactions which happened many ages before his birth. "Here is a fine collection of law ; acts of parliament ; systems of feudal, canon, civil, and municipal law ; tracts on the law of nature and nations ; Rhymer's Fœdera," &c. Sad monuments of men's being wholly inclined to evil, needing so many laws, covenants, and explications, to restrain them ! Lord, put thy law into my heart, and write it in my inward parts : there let me hide it that I may not sin against thee. "Here are the Philosophical transactions ; Nature displayed ; with the philosophic works of Ray, Newton, Leibnitz, Desaguliers, Keil, Derham, Sheuchzer, Buffon, Brooks, and Edward's natural histories ; with Hill's history of animals, vegetables, minerals," &c. Lord, how manifold are thy works ! in wisdom hast thou made them all. Not even these of nature can all our learned heads fine out to perfection.—In natural things, let me chiefly study their connexion with Christ ; let my soul desire nothing like, nothing besides, nothing after him. "Here is a valuable set of dictionaries, Ainsworth, Johnson, Chambers, the French and British Encyclopedias, Moreri, Herbelot, Bayle, Birch, Martinere, and Calmet : Chauffepied, British Biography, and Biographia Britannica : Ten thousands of words and things are explained in the former ; thousands of places and lives are described in the latter." But say, my soul, is there in them any name like Christ's, any history like his ? any thing like redemption through his blood ? any place like his immediate presence ? Is he not more than chief of all these

ten thousands? Alas! that my knowledge of him should resemble that procured by dictionaries; be so scanty and superficial? "Here is Busching's geography, with Bleau's and Moll's atlas; De Lisle, Bowen, Vagondy's, and all our late maps." How minute does our whole earth appear in them? but to one in eternity she appears still more insignificant. May, therefore, the gospel-maps of Canaan above, the inspired geography of heaven, be the delight, the study of my soul: how far will that better country exceed my most extensive views, and most sanguine expectations! "Here take their place the poems of lofty Milton, witful Cowley, elegant Pope, sprightly Thomson, awful Young, ingenious Blacklock, soaring Brown, spiritual Craig, divine Watts." Be these, and such, the recreation of my easy hours. Thou poetry, art half inspired! why so much prostituted to scorn the Almighty, fire the lustful stallion, gild the swollen worm, or deck the wallowing sow! Return, apostate art, thy Maker's praise proclaim; light all thy flames at Jesus and his love.—Thrice happy day, when nor Milton, nor archangels, shall outvie my songs to my well beloved; when my heart shall indite anthems all on fire, and my tongue shall outrun the pen of the ready writer. "Here stands various bodies of divinity; Turretine, Mastricht, Heidegger, Pictet, and Ridgley; with the valuable tracts of Witsius, Owen, Boston, Erskines, Hervey, and others almost innumerable." But how little a portion of that science is yet heard or known? nor even wise men can find it out. "Here is the best of writings, the Bible, with her principal commentaries! those of the elegant Cal-

“vin, laborious Pool, sagacious Patrick and Lowth, “practical Henry, copious Gill, literal Calmet, sensible Clark, plain Burkit, soft-flowing Doddridge, “judicious Guise, learned Vitringa, penetrating “Owen, pious Horn, curt Bengelious, dry Schul-“tens, and critical Whitby,” &c. How inexhaustible are the volumes of inspiration ! how many, as helped of God, have written on them ! and yet there is room.

“To dwell here, where I might quietly converse “with the great men of many ages, methinks would “be a paradise.” Lord, give me grace to read aright such books as I have.—Let me never be a desultory reader, leaping from book to book ; nor a posting reader, who observeth little as he goes along ; nor a lusting reader, reading merely from an itch to read, or a desire to know : but, like a judicious Christian, let me ponder what I read, observing carefully what points my soul to a God in Christ, and the things above ; and what volumes chiefly abound with hints of this nature : and, above all, the Bible ; let these be the delight, the daily exercise of my soul. Much rather will the mansions of my elder brother Christ, where I will converse with ancient patriarchs, apostles, and prophets, nay, with angels, and with God himself, be a paradise indeed : there, instead of paper volumes, shall I pursue the Lamb’s book of life ; and discern my own, and the names of thousands not mentioned by Moreri, or Birch, written there before the foundation of the world.—There shall every childish thing, every romance, and shadow, give place to endless perfection, substance, and reality : with ravishing transport shall I, shall all the ran-

somed, for ever dispute, which is the deepest debtor to free grace ; and shall be the loudest praiser of God and the Lamb : with enrapturing joy shall we glance the countless facts of redeeming love ; survey Jesus' *Fœdera*, his everlasting covenant ; behold the law in his heart, fulfilled and magnified by him ; and written in our heart, by a perfect conformity in him : there superficial knowledge shall for ever cease ; maps, systems, commentaries and bibles, shall be no more necessary ; I shall see God as he is, and know him, even as I am known : clearly shall creation shine in the face of her adored Maker : the unveiled glory of the Lamb shall be my sole, my all-sufficient commentary ; my only Bible : no more shall I need the sun of inspiration, nor the moon of instituted ordinances ; for the Lord God and the Lamb shall be my everlasting light, and my God my glory.

“ Family and secret worship, these preludes of “ endless hosannas, being over, my brother and I “ lie down on this soft bed.” How quickly must we sleep together in the dust ? shall not we even there sleep in Jesus' embrace ? shall not I for ever lie with him in his bed of love, his Father's bosom ? Exult, my soul, in the hope of the glory of God : how sweet shall such rest be to a labouring—a weary man ! “ Sleep shuts mine eyes.” May it be such as God gives to his beloved. Quickly shall death shut them not more to be opened till the morning of the resurrection. Quickly shall, not the darkness, but the noon-tide blaze of everlasting light, overwhelm my soul, and throw me into an endless transport of inconceivable joy. “ Have I, by night, awaked with

“a song in my mouth?” My dream of **JEHOVAH’S** kindness, in my redemption, and late deliverance has tuned my tongue to his praise.—Lord, whenever I awake, let me be still with thee.—Let my soul meditate on, and follow hard after thee, in the night-watches.—Let this be the pledge, that amidst endless ecstasy, the high praises of God shall be for ever in my mouth.—And since “for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me, the first-rate sinner, **Jesus Christ** might show forth all his long-suffering, for a pattern to them that shall hereafter believe; therefore unto the **King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God**, be honour and glory for ever. Amen.”

THE
CHRISTIAN JOURNAL
OF A
HARVEST-DAY.

“**W**HAT noise hath awakened me? It is that
“of the reapers rising to their work in the field.”
Are they preparing to labour for the meat that perish-
eth? and not I to labour for that which endureth to
everlasting life?—Shall the summer pass, and the
harvest end, while I am not saved? “A little ago,
“I was half awake; but relapsed into my slumber.
“Perhaps, this morning-drowsiness will make my
“journey too late, and occasion my lying out to-
“night.” Alas! what if my accursed sloth, my
stifling of conviction, and spending many years in a
total unconcern for my soul, prove her everlasting
ruin? what profit is it, if I gain the whole world
and lose my own soul?—Alas! if Christ be mine, he
is no more than my last shift, when God obliged me
to see that there was no escaping of hell without him.
With what pungent grief, and confounding shame,
do I remember, how often, in childhood and youth,
I neglected prayer, and reading of God’s word; and
with what unconcern I performed religious duties,
when my parents pushed and directed me to them!
“Now I have got up, and put on my clothes.”
But whether I be risen with Christ from a state of
sin and misery; whether I be clothed with his righ-
teousness, or his curse, I know not. “My mirror
(6.) A a

“shows a wrinkled brow, a fading countenance.” Death is at my door ; but whether it carry me to heaven or hell, I know not. O dreadful back-lock ! near twenty years I am sure I lived without Christ : —twice twenty years I have lived in awful uncertainty, whether he be mine or not.

“The children are up ; put all that can lisp out “language to prayer.” Lord, forbid that I should be of those unchristian parents who regard more the food and raiment, than the prayers, the instruction, the souls of their children ; who cannot, without pain, see their young ones want a meal, or have a pin wrong ; and yet, without concern, can suffer them, an hundred times over, to restrain secret prayer at morn or night ; nay, perhaps, bring them up like ignorant, careless beasts, till six, eight, or twelve years of age.—Since by idling away the flower of my youth, I have hazarded eternal ruin, let not me drag my tender little ones to hell with me ; let none of them for ever curse me for neglecting their Christian education.—Poor babes, did I bring them into life children of disobedience, heirs of hell ; and can my heart endure to see them so, without endeavouring to pluck them out of the burning ? Were I not an unnatural, devilish monster, if I could ? If, while children, they are trained up in Satan’s way, is there much hope that they will ever depart from it ? It is true, they may not well know what they pray, read, or hear from God, nor be expected to be properly serious in their work ; but, without early instruction, and urging to duty, are they ever like to be better ?—How many full grown persons have I seen as ignorant, and as unconcerned about their eternal

interests, as babes of three years old? Alas! careless parents, careless masters, careless teachers, and careless ministers, “are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.”—Are not their skirts presently full of the blood of poor innocents?—If I must make my dreadful bed in hell, let me not draw a multitude after me: and, if a bleeding Redeemer save me, God forbid that I should for ever destroy the souls and bodies of my children, servants or neighbours.

“Now we have essayed family-worship.” Ah! heartless work, while I know not whether God accepts or rejects our service: But perhaps it will be accepted with respect to others in the family, though not with respect to me.—Be the case and issue as it will, in Jesus’ strength, I determine to essay to worship and serve him while I live.

“My companion hath got the start of me, and is gone off.—He neglects morning family-worship “during the harvest.” Lord, shall the greatness of thy bounty to us, in the crop, encourage even some professors thus to rob thee of thy worship? Need not the reapers’ hands thy special care? Is not the whole provision of the following year at a distinguished crisis? and yet shall men sin, because need—because grace doth abound?

“Now I leave my family.” How quickly must I go from them into the eternal state.—If I never see them more, Lord, be thou an husband to the widow, a father to the fatherless, and a master to my servants: these thou gavest me to bring up for thee; assuring me, that my life should go for their life.—I have wee-

fully mismanaged them : but into thy hands, O God of truth, I commit them !

“ Now I am on my way.” Let me apply to the creatures around me for spiritual instruction : all things are full of God. “ Here is a field of run-ridge ; “ but every man knows his own.” So are the members of Jesus and Satan mingled together ; but the “ Lord knoweth them that are his.”—And shall I live a moment longer, without knowing whether the everlasting God, or everlasting burnings, be the portion of my cup ? No : let me just now, with more than usual earnestness, and dependance on him for direction, try myself to the utmost : Lord, thou who knowest all things, do thou search and try me ; for amidst this confusion of heart and life, I cannot, without uncommon aid, distinguish between light and darkness, reality and delusion, common and especial operations of thy Spirit : enable me candidly to compare my heart and life with thy word ; and to draw a just conclusion ! discover my grace, if I have any.—Upon a diligent search, I am persuaded, that I am wholly loathsome, weak, worthless, and wicked in my own eyes :—that I love, or desire to love, Christ above all things ; and to count them but dung to win him, and be found in him ; “ not having my own righteousness, but the righteousness of God which is by faith :”—that I abhor my naughty heart, because it will not love him much more abundantly :—and that I love all those who bear his image, though they differ from, reproach, and injure me. Hence, with fear and trembling, I conclude, that Christ is mine, and I am his.—Lord, if I am wrong, speedily

undecieve me ; if right, confirm my persuasion, by large additions to my grace, and by sensible visits of thy love. Confirm it even now, my soul, by taking hold of God's covenant, as tendered to the chief of sinners ; add thy hearty amen to the promises of pardon, peace, newness of heart, and the like.—Be it recorded in heaven, that this moment I accept of Jesus, as “ come to seek and save that which is lost. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief.”

“ God hath given us the latter rain, though scarce “ moderately.” O his wisdom and goodness, in so much proportioning wind and rain, cold and warmth, to our necessities !—But, how foolish are we to place happiness in created enjoyments, when too much, as well as too little of them, may be a sore evil !—How foolish to resist God, who hath all creatures ready armed to punish us for our sin, and can turn mercies into plagues when he pleaseth !

“ Here is a field of rank corn quite laid down : “ it will scarce afford any thing but plenty of coarse “ straw.” Alas ! how many, who, in the early period of life, flourish exceedingly, overtop all around, in knowledge and apparent seriousness, do, by after sloth, lying down to slumber, become quite barren and unfruitful ! serve for no purpose in the church but to bear bulk !—How many, in days of adversity and drought, promise fair ! but when God plentifully rains upon them outward enjoyments, or advanceth them to higher stations in the world, become careless and earthly-minded : a reproach to God and to themselves !—How ready, at last, to be trod-

den down as straw for the dunghill ; and to have their portion in hell-fire ! “ Here is a field of charming “ corn : numbers of stalks grow from one root : the “ ears are large and heavy.” How charming to see a saint abound in the fruits of righteousness ! to see him at once devout, always leaning on his Saviour, always walking with his God : a dutiful child, an affectionate husband, a truly kind parent, a faithful subject, a peaceful neighbour, a generous friend, a redeemer of time, a counsellor in perplexity, a sympathizer in trouble, a comforter amidst grief ; firm, intrepid, judicious, full of tenderness, compassion, and benevolence ; devout, without seeking to be seen of men ; modest without bashfulness ; frank and affable without impertinence ; obliging and complaisant without servility ; cheerful without noise !—How charming to behold the increase of glory to God, peace on earth, and good-will to men, which Jesus hath brought forth ?—And thrice-happy day, when an “ handful of corn,” Jesus Christ preached by a few ministers, in a few ordinances, “ on the tops of mountains,” among barren Gentile sinners, “ shakes with fruit like trees,” produceth numerous converts, fruitful in good works !

“ The summer drought hath so withered this spot, “ that the late rains cannot recover it.” How rarely are professors, who, after a spring-tide flourishing, wither away, recovered from their apostacy ! publicans and harlots go before them into the kingdom of God. And how dreadful to fall into hell backward ? “ All summer hath the seed of this ridge lain under “ the clod ; and but just now springs up, when it “ ought to ripen.” O the disorder introduced into

life, by the want of early concern for our eternal salvation ! Of how many summer-like, precious heart-warning ordinances, and influences, do we hereby lose the benefit !—Ah ! how we endanger our soul ; late repentance being seldom found ! “ Here the corn “ is good : but warped with brambles.” How often doth the most eminent, the liveliest grace, dwell together with the most foolish, peevish, or rugged temper ! Where weakness and sin abound, grace much more abounds. “ Yonder field is quite over-run “ with thistles : neglect to weed this corn in the proper season, renders it painful to reap it ; and impossible to do it to perfection.” Negligence to mortify lusts, and purify our way, issueth in awful vexation, and loss to ourselves and others. O the piercing pain, and hurtful ruin, which early spiritual sloth, or timorousness, prepares for our soul at last ! “ How “ ripe is this field of corn ! the roots loose ; the “ ears hang down ; the grain is firm and hard.” O that my heart were but loosed, and weaned from this present world ! that all my inward powers hang downwards in deep humility, and self-denial ! that my graces, desires, and exercises, were no more light and shadowy, but solid and substantial ! then should I be truly ripe for death, the grave, and the presence of God.—But while it is otherwise, what am I ripe for, but the judgments of heaven ! “ Every field “ brings forth according to the nature of the grain “ sown : what a man soweth, that doth he reap.” And as sin or grace is sown in my heart, such is my fruit : as I sow in this world, so shall I reap in the next : If I to the flesh sow corruption, corruption and ~~woe~~ shall be my harvest ! if, by receiving grace, and

practising holiness, I sow to the Spirit, then shall I reap life everlasting.

“ Here comes the old soldier ; how often hath he “ entertained his audience with the history of his “ warlike exploits ! ” But where is Jesus, the Captain of my salvation ! O how my soul longs to hear thee rehearse the dear story of thy God-like exploits ! Thou hast “ done excellent things ; this is known in all the earth . ” How would my heart, my ears, hang upon thy lips, to hear thee tell thy love ! thy loads of guilt assumed ! the travail of thy soul ! thy battles, thy victories ! Repeat the ravishing tale ten thousand times, it would be still fresh and new to my soul. “ Yonder stands my young friend . ” How the sight of him at once cheers and wounds my heart ! Born in a graceless family, without Christian education : but what a proficient in the way of the Lord ! I have thrown away more hours than he hath lived ; yet how much he excels me in every thing for which I ought to live. Alas ! while all men wish to be counted virtuous or religious, few care or labour to be so ! they walk by example, rather than by rule : they show themselves ignorant of the truth, by their want of conformity to it, and by their conceit of their knowledge of it. By their care about their body and this earth, they lose both soul and body—earth and heaven. Our steadfastness in our religion avails nothing, if our religion do not change our heart and life from self to Christ, from sin to God. Better live and die mere heathens, than live and die mere professors of the true religion.—All the duties of religion must flow from an implanted principle of real grace. It is not talking of, or for Christ, but con-

formity to him, and walking in and with him, that will mark us real Christians. If we walk unevenly and unwatchfully, we shall live uncomfortably. If we incline to live like Christians, we shall labour always to live humble, thankful, watchful, and cheerful. And if we do not want to do unlawful things, we must sometimes deny ourselves those that are lawful in themselves. Religion must be our earnest labour and business, before it can be our delight. Lukewarmness is the best temper in our body, but the worst in our soul and religion. Serious fits of religion avail nothing, unless we have an abiding sense of God on our hearts:—And we have never any sense of God or his mercy to us-ward, unless we have a sense of our duty to him, and study to perform it in its proper time: hearing while God speaks, believing while he promiseth, praying while he hears, and obeying while he commands. Religion may be much talked of, but is never understood, till our conscience be awakened, and we know the worth of our soul, and our need of a Saviour. Nor doth it ever flourish till we can naturalize spiritual things, and spiritualize natural things. And if we expect to live with Christ in heaven, we must live in him, on him, with him, and to him on earth!—“Yonder comes the post, sounding his horn.”—Blessed Spirit, make haste; sound to the centre of my heart the great trumpet of the glorious gospel! bring me good news from the court above, that my “sins which are many, are forgiven me;” that God will quickly visit my soul with his loving-kindness; and speedily free me from a cursed, careless, carnal heart.

"Here the reapers hire themselves." Lord Jesus, how many hireling pastors and professors are in thy church? May I serve thee from love to thy person and work: may I count my work my wages. Dear bought before-hand, infinitely deep in thy debt, let me serve thee with such cheerfulness and diligence, as testify that I cannot but love and serve thee: then shall my labour not be in vain in the Lord. "To-day the reapers insist for high wages." Alas! what high value doth our legal heart put upon the mere shadow of service to Christ? But when I have done all, let me count myself an unprofitable servant. Lord! damnation is the best wages that my best works can deserve: let me, therefore, have redemption through thy blood, the forgiveness of my duties, as well as of my sins, according to the riches of thy grace. Far better live in poverty than in pride. Yet, alas! pride every where abounds. How often, in undervaluing others for want of things, or envying their having of them, do we manifest what we are proud of, or would be proud of, if we had it; and while many are proud of what they are, others are proud of what they are not. How many are proud in their spirit, when they are very poor in purse! how many mark their pride in rags, in solemn looks, lowly behaviour, and self-discommendation: but especially in accounting the gospel foolishness, and refusing Christ, and his righteousness, grace, and salvation! How often doth pride originate in folly, error, and ignorance of ourselves; and must end in our shame, either penitential or penal. How unreasonable for creatures to be proud; much more for sinners who are hastening to hell; or saints, who are but

newly risen from it? Why should men be proud, who have nothing but what is sinful and shameful of their own? Shall dust, ashes, a worm, emptiness, and perishing, be proud? It is both comeliest and safest for sinful creatures to lie very low, especially before God. Better be humbled for sin, than proud of grace. If we knew ourselves better, we should be more humble. If God hath pardoned us, we ought to be humbled; because we had need of it, and because we have received it. If Christ humbled himself to honour us, we ought to humble ourselves, in order to honour him. No devils in hell, or temptations in the world, can hurt him that liveth always humble, and dependent on Christ: but to despair, or to aggravate our sinfulness beyond Christ's saving power, is but devilish humility; a sullen pride; and a covert of a hardened heart. True humility maketh way for Christ, and throws our soul at his feet!—If we were more humble, we should live more contented, thankful, charitable, and quiet, and in a fairer way to be honoured.—Self-denial, and abhorrence, would make self-resignation very easy. They that deserve nothing but hell, ought always to be content with any thing which God gives; to bless him for every good thing they have, and trust him for every thing they want; commit themselves to his keeping, and submit to his disposal.—If we believingly obey his revealed will, we shall kindly submit to his providential will. If we cannot bring our condition to our mind, let us bring our mind to our condition. Neither contentment nor discontentment proceed from men's outward circumstances, but from their inward disposition. If a man be not content in

the circumstances in which he is, he will not be content in any station in which he would be. "These reapers have furnished themselves with sickles." So, Lord, do self-righteous men attempt to serve thee, with their own wisdom and strength; but work in me both to will and to do; the author and finisher of my grace, my labour: give me full opportunity, willingness, and strength, and then command what thou wilt, it shall be done. "Now some farmers set their hireling reapers on horseback, to hasten them to their work: but, at night, they will lodge them ill; and at the end of harvest, dismiss them wearied, to walk home on foot." How often, for the furtherance of his work in the church, doth Jesus bestow a large measure of honour, gifts, and frames on men; whom, after finishing his purpose, he sends home to everlasting punishment with a curse, to make their bed in hell! "What numbers of reapers remain unhired!" Alas! how many nations are not, by the gospel, called to the fellowship of God's Son! How many live in the church, who never feel the eminent strivings of the divine Spirit! Lord, how many of my school-fellows, friends, and acquaintance, hast thou passed by, whilst thou hast called, striven with, and drawn perverse unworthy me! O the sovereignty of thy grace! "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy."

"But where were the bulk of these reapers yesterday? Were they sanctifying a Sabbath to the Lord their God? Or, did they rather loiter away the sacred moments at ale-houses, or by the way-side? Or, were they travelling with burdens

“to this place?” Alas! that farmers, pastors, and magistrates, do not concur to repress this horrid custom? Shall people travel far to earn wages by hard labour; and by abusing the Sabbath, procure a curse upon them? Shall they bring a curse upon the country, whither they come to earn their bread? Do they imagine that there is no conscience, no God to behold and avenge their behaviour? Have they no souls, that they labour so hard only for their body?

“Here they reap: every stroke of the sickle cuts down a multitude of ears.” Ye sweeping judgments of heaven, what havoc do you often make of nations! O death, what multitudes cuttest thou down every moment! perhaps more than an hundred thousand of our guilty race are often thy daily meal. While I speak, what thousands perish by thy unrelenting hand; and expire in thy bloody jaws? Lord, be thou their present help in time of need. Awful thought! how many of them launch forth into eternal fire! How terrible to die, without thoughts of death, and preparation for it! or to go to hell, after quenching of conviction, and despising of Christ! Let Jesus keep my house, my heart, always in order; for I shall die, and not live!—Let him, by the gospel, cut thousands from their natural root, and bind them up in the bundle of life with himself. “How quickly is this reaped corn bound into sheaves!” At death, and judgment, shall the various classes of sinners be gathered, and irrecoverably set apart for destruction; and the saints unalterably separated into live eternal.

“What a number glean after these reapers!”—

Alas! what multitudes, multitudes in the field of the broken covenant, and of sinful courses, glean after Satan, after naughty and legal preachers, and after those men who set bad examples! Lord, may my soul never glean but in the field of thy new covenant, in the field of thy precious word: when ministers, thy reapers, read or explain it to me, may I with refreshing pleasure, glean after them; receive thy truth in the love of it, with much affection, and joy of the Holy Ghost.

“What a sound doth idle, profane, wanton, and reproachful talk make on this field! unhappy ears that must hear it.” Better that these reapers had no tongue, no reason, than to use men thus. O the filthiness, which must be lodged in their hearts! for “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” O our enmity against God; that while our hands are filled with his goodness, our tongues are filled with his dishonour! Alas! cannot people meet about their civil employ, without agreeing to forget their Maker, the God that is above;—and their future gathering to his tribunal, to account for their conduct? Alas! when outwardly employed in his service, how frequent is the vanity and filthiness of our heart! Lord, keep the door of my lips: if I cannot speak to thine honour, and my neighbour’s edification, seal them up: let never that hell within me render my tongue a world of iniquity.

“In what danger are the reapers’ hands and feet, from the toads which swarm in this fat field!” How often in the fat fields of prosperity, and even of gospel-ordinances, do hurtful lusts and tempta-

tions swarm all around us ; that not only hands and feet, but our hearts, are in the utmost hazard ! If increased in honour and wealth, what risk we run from our connections with wicked men ! How few behave as lively Christians, amidst great abundance of this world ! And, alas ! most men are eternally ruined by this world ! If it be our portion here, hell must be our portion hereafter. Let me, therefore, neither leave the world, nor love it. It promiseth comforts, but pays with sorrows. Its riches and prosperity will either kill with care, or surfeit with delight. Riches are rather to be feared than sought, lest they prove silver-bars in our way to heaven. Riches are indifferent things in themselves, and become good or bad as they are used. Let me then be always as indifferent to them, as they are to me. I may put a price on them, but they cannot put one on me. I must answer to God for them, but they cannot answer for me. Let me love the men that are in the world, but never the things of it. If I have too great affection for any worldly thing, I may expect an answerable affliction. Whatever I make an idol of, will be a cross to me, if I belong to Christ ; and a curse if I do not. Man was not made for the world, but the world for man. The more the things of this world are known, they will be the less admired and prized : And, indeed, riches are but dust ; honours, shadows ; pleasures, bubbles ; and men, lumps of vanity, compounded of sinfulness and misery.

“ Here the reapers make very unequal progress : the house-ridge goes far before the hirelings.” Seldom are such as cry up self-righteousness, and put a

high value on their works, truly careful to "live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." It is those who live near Christ, and are ashamed of their best deeds, who are zealous of good works, and study to be perfect as God is perfect. Let me, therefore, always live in the world; on the Lord, by and from the Lord, to the Lord, and with the Lord.

"On this open field the reapers sit down to break-fast: what beautiful simplicity is this!" Memorial of our primeval estate in paradise; spur to contentment; and to me emblem of the humble, happy consess of ransomed millions on the fields of light. "How large the meal that these reapers take! their hard labour and fresh air are the cause." When I enjoy the fresh breezes of divine influence, and abound in the labour of love; for what abundant share of the fulness of God it appetizeth my soul! Give me then ten thousand sweet frames, ten thousand creations, my heart crieth GIVE, GIVE! Give me God himself as my all in all, or else I die. "Some have brought along their little ones, to share their harvest meals with them." If God be gracious to me, let me be truly kind to others: "To do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices, God is well pleased." What gift or grace he freely bestows on me, let me liberally improve to the edification of others: let me instruct my children and inferiors; communicate experience with Christian friends; if Jesus refresh my soul, let me pray for; let me invite multitudes, to share with me: "There is bread enough in his house, and to spare: he that watereth, shall be watered himself."

“ But what means this disorderly practice ? sundry
“ of these reapers ask a blessing and return thanks
“ for their meal by themselves ; some neither crave
“ the one, nor render the other.” Woes me ! are
all these thirty, master and servants, so ashamed of
God, that every one blusheth to be the mouth of the
rest, in an address to his Maker ? are many of them
brutishly ignorant if there be a God, from whom we
receive our mercies !—But, Lord, how much worse
still are those, who can hear a sermon without crav-
ing a blessing to it, and essaying to pray it over after
it is heard !

“ How pleasantly and beautifully the clover,
“ which is to succeed, grows up along with the corn,
“ on this field !” And even so, miscellaneous thoughts
of importance ought to be fixed in my heart, and prac-
tised in my life ; as that I should fear every sin, but
no suffering. It is an ease for a soul to confess
sin, in an humble, heart-broken, and sin-hating man-
ner. True Christians justify God, and judge and
condemn themselves, under the heaviest afflictions.
The least spiritual things ought to be preferred to
the greatest temporal ones. There is no real bond-
age, but either in sin, or for sin. Christians will
sooner overcome their outward enemies by praying
for them, than by praying or fighting against them.
Bad times well improved, are far better than good
times mispent and abused. We ought always to shut
our eyes from beholding, our ears from hearing, and
our heart from entertaining sin. If once we be wil-
ling to part with our dearest lust, we shall be willing
to part with our life for Christ. Christians must be
brought into fires of persecution, in order to heat

them for being joined together in love. Men will have little comfort in suffering for that which is but a notion in their head, and not a truth fixed in their heart. The lesser the truths be for which we suffer, our love to Christ appears the more. God's least things are of more importance than the world's greatest things.—Words, opinions, and outward performance of duties, are but the smaller points in religion. Men never trust Christ, but they find him faithful; and never trust their heart, but they find it deceitful.—If God hide our secret sins from the view of the world, we should the more freely confess them to himself.—The strength of all our inward corruptions sometimes appears in one; so that if we overcome that, we overcome them all. The strength of inward corruption is never known, but when we meet with temptations to, and opportunities of exerting it.—Souls will soon become empty, which are always letting out, but not careful to lay in from Christ. We should lay in Christ, lay up with Christ, and then lay out for Christ. We ought to beware of being always wooing Christ, without ever marrying him.—If Satan cease his assaults, he is but damming up his temptations, that he may, of a sudden, let them out with more violence. He doth not, like Christ, warn before he strike.—Christ's work is its own wages, and his service perfect freedom. As our safety lies in our doing our duty, our duty ought always to be chiefly aimed at by us. He that loves not Christ more than his life, bids fair to lose both Christ and his life. Christ, as a loadstone, draws souls to himself; and, as a crystal amongst stones, he gives them a lustre. The only way to avoid

some temptations, is humbly to fall down on our face. If we make haste to perform our duty, God will make haste to give us our reward. Saints' sins are new sufferings to Christ, and their afflictions are his wounds. Reading of the scriptures promotes meditation, and meditation prayer, and prayer every good work. Men may come too late to God; but he can never come too late to them. If we be content with that which Christ gives us, we shall want nothing. It is a mercy to feel our want of grace, and a greater to know the worth of grace. It is a great matter to have true grace; a greater to have assurance of it; and no less to use that assurance aright. It is never honourable to commend friends, or discommend enemies very much. We never command others aright, till we have learned to obey; and unless we command in love, humility, and self-denial.—An even, thorough-paced, self-fearing, and heart-melting Christian, is always the best. This world is a bulky nothing, deluding the bad, and disturbing and distracting the good. Satan prevails more by his craft, than by his cruel power and violence. Hypocrites' hearts are like stinking ponds, in which fish die, and frogs live. If we flee from the devil, he will certainly pursue us; but sometimes it is better to slight his temptations, than to fight with them.—Serious thoughts of our death tend to deaden our sinful lust. Opinion-sowing, and church-railing professors, have commonly more self than grace. Both Christ, and sin, appear biggest in the view of Christians, when they are under trouble. Christ puts most of his oil of grace into broken hearts; and there it is best kept. The less we strive for our-

selves, the more will Christ contend for us. Our soul ought, like a dial, to follow Christ, the Sun of Righteousness.—Afflictions are Christ's love tokens. Small sins yielded to, make way for greater. He that converts a soul, covers and gains more than a world. Zeal, without knowledge, is like metal in a blind horse, which stumbles, and overthrows his rider. Young Christians commonly need a curb, and old ones a spur. If we do not wish to be envied, let us never be too eager to be loved. Our grace should always lead and govern all our gifts. A graceless heart is content with nothing, but what helps it toward hell; nor a gracious, with any thing but what helps it heavenward. All our grace ought to be exercised in opposition to sin, and never for it. Whenever we are beaten, or in danger, we should flee to Christ our tower. Nor ought we ever to complain of our restraint, as long as our heart can go out toward God and his way. Nor should we ever wish to be out of this evil world, till God hath no service for us in it. Changes of lot, by marriage, advancement, &c. much try the reality of our grace. One sin should cause more grief to us than all our sufferings. Sins die and fall off true Christians, as leaves fall off trees in harvest. Christ's sufferings best represent the real weight, and dreadful nature of sin. All our good works should be improved to strengthen our faith; and all our bad ones to promote our repentance. God's promises are our prospects; and faith is the only eye that can look through them. It is as absurd to wish deliverances before God's time, as for women to wish untimely births.—Saints' sins are like weeds heaped up, in or-

der to rot. True Christians are like flint-stones which keep their fire under water itself. Our graces ought to be exercised, chiefly in opposition to our leading corruptions. It is very hard to act faith, when there is no outward encouragements ; and as hard to do it, when our eyes are filled with them. The more we believe of what Christ says, or suffer for his sake, the more we may expect of his Spirit. All exercise of grace strengthens itself, and destroys sin. We ought first to put forth faith in our prayers, and then follow them with faith. We ought to rejoice in what Christ is, and doth for us, rather than in what we are, and do for him. We should mightily oppose sin when we feel it strong, and eagerly mortify it, when it seems to grow weak. We never reprove aright, unless we hate the sin, and pity the sinner, and unless we relish Christian reproof, we love our sin more than our soul. It is dreadful to be neither careful to do well, nor patient when we do ill. True Christians are often killed, but never hurt. Christ gives more sweets, than balance all his bitters. We are seldom willing to leave the world, till God make it too hot for us. Nor do we ever know the weakness of our grace, till God's Spirit withdraw from us, and sin and Satan violently assault us. We are apt to be soonest weary of self-examination, meditation, and other best exercises. Careless hearing or reading makes careless hearts, and careless hearts make cursed lives. We should labour to know God, and ourselves in Christ, and Christ in ourselves ; and to learn to live in the Lord, on the Lord, and by, and from, and to the Lord ; that we may live for ever with him.

Our care ought to be to wait on God, to walk with God, work all our works in and for God ; and to bring our will in every thing to the will of God : and, the worse we see others, to be the better ourselves. Lord, write these proverbs in my heart, and copy them out in my life !

“ Yonder friend scatters a lapful of apples among his reapers : what running : what striving among them for a share !” O Tree of Life, when thou shakest thy fruit, when thou castest abroad the apples of thy everlasting blessings amongst us, how should we run and strive to get large shares thereof ! Shall we strive for earthly vanities, and not for the fruit that is better than gold ? Thrice happy, when the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force, and every man presseth into it ?

“ Here the corn is so thin and short, or so broken down by the beasts, and by the wind or rain, that it can hardly be reaped.” But, ye judgments of God, ye king of terrors, find no difficulty to thrust in your sharp sickle, and mow down the nations, small or great : how unpleasant to come into your hands, while I am a dwarf in religion, or trodden down by lust and temptations !

“ What noise do I hear ! it is that of the guns discharged from yonder castle, to celebrate the late victory of our troops.” How astonishing ! Have an army of blasphemers obtained a victory in favour of an abandoned, a perjured people ? Lord, how great is thy goodness ! how great is thy sovereignty ! Rejoice evermore, my soul ; rejoice, ye ransomed, that Jesus triumphed over principalities and powers,

making a show of them openly on his cross :—that he hath subdued the nations ; goeth forth conquering and to conquer :—that he shall destroy Antichrist, and every other opposer ; gather the kingdoms of this world to himself :—that Christ in me shall quickly subdue and root out every lust :—that I, with millions, shall, in endless hosannas, celebrate his non-such victories on Calvary, and on the judgment-seat.

“ Yonder runs a mad dog, with pursuers at his heels ; poor animal, he hath eaten too much carrion ; hath over-reached his strength ; or been bitten by his mad fellow.” How is my soul maddened by the bite of the enraged old serpent ! by feeding on earthly enjoyments ! and by hard labour for very vanity ! how often hath my tongue lolled out idle and evil language ! how often have I foamed out my own rage and shame ! how often do I run to and fro in doing mischief ! how have I been terrified at, and shunned drinking of, or bathing in the water of life ! But how stupendous have the mercy and patience of God to me been ! how stupendous, that, to-day, neither God nor men pursue me to my ruin ! that my madness is not punished with the enraging bite of this mad beast ? “ Were this animal spared, what mischief might he quickly do !” One sinner destroyeth much good ; like one infected with the plague, he with pleasure spreads the infection unto all around : one generation, from age to age, infects another. Ah ! Lord, how many have my sinful advice and example already corrupted ! O quickly cure me of my madness, that I may infect no more.

“ Here the herds and flocks are exposed to public

“auction.” How many such animals were yearly slain to remove the Hebrews’ guilt ! but not these, but Jesus, by one offering of himself, finished transgression, and made an end of sin, for ever perfecting them that are sanctified. May his atonement be the endless righteousness, peace, comfort, and feast of my soul ! “ Here every thing is sold to the highest bidder.” But, in Christ’s market, every thing is given, to the lowest bidder ; to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly. O fit ! O happy ! thrice happy sale for me, who have nothing of my own but my sin ! When I retire into myself, I see nothing in the universe more vile, more miserable. But thrice blessed maxim of Heaven, that it is more blessed to give than to receive ! However, let me give myself to the highest bidder :—By his power Jesus made me : by his blood he redeemed me : by his bounty he preserves and provides for me : by his grace he bequeaths to me the everlasting fullness of God.—Till Satan and the world can do more for me, let Christ alone possess my heart. O his infinite loveliness and love ! He became like us, that he might make us like himself. By his death sin was expiated, the law satisfied, the devil conquered, and men are saved. If, therefore, I would be a Christian, his blood must be my ransom, his Spirit my instructor and comforter, his word my rule, and my food, his supper my feast, and his sabbath my fair. If I would walk or work, he must be my strength : if I would stand, he must be my foundation : if I would be saved, he must be my sanctuary : if I would live, he must live in me ; if I would have Christ all to me, I must neither abuse him by self-conceited presump-

tion, nor refuse him by self-destroying despair ! and the more my own sinfulness is known and felt, the more will he be prized : if it be bitter, he will be sweet ; if it be hell, he will be heaven. There is no safety, but in his arms, bosom, and heart : no comfort, but in his living in us on earth, and in our going to him at death : there is no honour like relation to him, no riches like his graces ; no learning like the knowledge of him ; no persons like his friends and servants. Let me always behold and admire his person as lovely, love his name as sweet, embrace his doctrines as comfortable, obey his commands as reasonable, and submit to his cross as honourable. Let me with wonder behold, believe, pry into, and survey his love in its topless height, bottomless depth, endless length, and unbounded breadth !—Oh ! if I but knew myself and my Saviour ! I am poor, but he is rich : I am dead, but he is life : I am sin, but he is righteousness : I am guiltiness, but he is grace : I am misery, but he is mercy : I am lust, but he is salvation. He ever lives, ever loves, ever pities, ever pleads, and ever saves to the uttermost.

“ Here two neighbours have exchanged their horse : methinks the one hath got a considerable advantage.” Lord, how often hath my wicked heart attempted to exchange thee, and my immortal soul, for that which is but vanity of vanities ! How often for a trifle, nay, for a sinful pleasure, have I neglected a thought, a visit, an adoration of thee ! But happy, happy, that my stupid folly, my cursed enmity, cannot dislodge thee from my heart, nor put thee out of my possession !—Let me never take the advantage of a neighbour ; if I gain he must lose,

rather I must lose, since, by fraudulence and falsehood, I give my soul to Satan, as a boot to the bargain.—Let me never haste to be rich: great gain is seldom honest, and rarely gives content.—But let me ever buy, never sell Christ, truth, and time: so shall my gain be large at last.—Ah! how Christ and truth undervalued, time and eternity mismeasured, ruin mankind!

“Yonder friendly cur daily attends his master, and would rather lose his life, than suffer him to be hurt; yet has nothing for his reward but bones and crumbs: and the outside of the door for his lodging.” How constantly, how faithfully, even unto death, do multitudes serve the devil, the world, and their lusts, without any other reward than some bones of outward enjoyments, some crumbs of sinful pleasure, with an everlasting bed amidst devouring flames! Lord, may I never serve such monsters of ingratitude: but let my soul cleave to thee, delight in thy presence, gladly lie at thy feet, follow thee whithersoever thou goest, and risk my life in defence of the gospel. O then, the grace, the glory that is appointed for me! Mark, my soul, “How this brute snarls at the stone thrown at him, and overlooks the hand which threw it.” Alas, how often do I, how often do multitudes, spurn trouble, without eyeing the hand of God in it! how many take both affliction and deliverance as no more than chance that happeneth to them! “Lo, how the vile animal licks up his own vomit!” Woes me! how often have I recommitted the sins for which I once felt deep remorse! how many with pleasure, return to the abominations which they once seemed to repent

of! O to be saved from such horrid filthiness! God allows us any thing but sin. If sin, therefore, be in the fashion, we must be out of it. None can be a true Christian, if he doth not choose to suffer rather than sin. Sin breeds plagues and diseases in us, draws down troubles and death on us; digs graves, and kindles hell for us. Why then are we not troubled on account of the cause of all our trouble? Why do we not groan under that burden, which makes the whole creation to groan? Why plead in defence, denial, or excuse of our most dreadful accuser? How can I love Christ, if I love sin, which is the arch-enemy of his life, his glory, interest, and people? and which provokes him in his enemies, and grieves him in his friends? How can I believe his grace, if the sense of it doth not make me to hate sin? Let me then account sin my burden and wound, and Christ my cure and comfort. Since he died for my sin, that it might die and my soul live, let me be sick of sin that I may die to it; let me cheerfully take shame, be humbled for, and hate sin, and suffer any thing rather than sin: let me repent of it as sin, and so of all sin. Let no sinful pleasures prevent my godly sorrows for sin. In the faith and hope of God's mercy, let me repent of, and confess my sin, to his glory, and my own shame.

“With what pleasure do yonder swine lie in their dunghill? how would they grunt and gnash, should I attempt to stir them up! they abhor a cleanly apartment; and, if washed, would quickly return to grovel and wallow in the mire.” Mournful picture of sinners lying in the dunghill of earthly portions, carnal lusts, and sinful pleasures! Ah! how

these hate-awakening troubles, gnash at alarming reproofs, and continue in their sin and sloth ? how they hate Jesus' bosom, and his pure ordinances ; and are set upon returning to folly ! “ How earnestly these “ grovelling brutes dig in the earth with their snout : “ and eat almost any thing that comes in their way ! ” What multitudes, multitudes of men, by carnal thoughts, purposes, and desires, daily dig in this earth, this mansion of worms ; and sadly esteem and content themselves with any but Christ for their food. “ How comely yonder pigs ! but how unsightly “ when old ! ” How awful, that many who appear as Jesus' lambs in their youth, are, by wallowing in sins, transformed into the likeness of devils as they grow old ! “ How often in agonies of birth, doth the “ savage sow eat up the just-ferried fruit of her “ womb ! ” Ye worse than brutal mothers, behold your horrid picture : how often, to conceal your guilt, do you murder the hapless tenant of your belly ! how often imbrue your hands in your infant's guiltless blood ! How often, you indulgent but bloody parents, doth your ungodly example, your neglect of prayer for, and of Christian instruction, of your children, pierce them through with many, with eternal sorrows ? How often, amidst your fawning care, amidst the gaudy scenes of vanity, do you bring them up to endless fire ? You parents and teachers, have you forgot that these pretty children have immortal souls ? that God hath charged you to take, and train them up for him ? If no conscience of duty move you, think how you will please to have your ears dinned, your heart shocked, with the rueful shrieks, the horrid curses of your damned offspring, your damned charge ! how

will you hear them, at the tribunal, imprecate ten-fold vengeance on your murderous head ! Tremble at your ugly image, you careless pastors, who feed yourselves upon your flock, and seek not them, but theirs.

“ How this dunghill swarms with vermin ! ”
How swarms our dunghill world with sinners, temptations, and snares ! How, after inexpressible pains from above to sanctify me, doth my soul swarm with lusts, pride, unbelief, legality, blasphemy, covetousness, and the like ! “ I am carnal, sold under sin. In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good things : ” but my name is legion ; for many lusts and devils are lodged in me. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death !

“ Here the poultry have destroyed more corn than they are worth ; here they have trampled under foot what a few months ago they would have gladly eaten.” Alas ! what good do sinners destroy ! how we waste the offers and the influences of divine grace ; and condemn the ordinances, opportunities, and enjoyments, which at other times we would have gladly embraced ! Let me so imitate these feathered tribes no more : but when I drink water out of the wells of salvation, let not my head, as theirs, but my heart, be lifted up to heaven, where my treasure is : lifted up in praise for what I have received, and in prayer for what I further need.
“ Yonder lie the scattered pinions of one, which perhaps the fox, this morning, carried off from the roost.” O the cursed diligence, subtlety, and boldness of Satan, that crafty fox, and his seed ! how late they set, how early they rise, to mischief ! Even

in my spiritual rest of fellowship with God, how readily they may seize me ! Bless the Lord, O my soul, that they cannot kill thee ; nor carry thee quite off :—" Watch and pray, that thou enter not into temptation."

" How strangely have the fields ripened this fortnight past ! the clear shining sun, and the bright moon, are the cause." When my soul feels the warming, the enlivening power of Jesus and his word, how fast her graces ripen ! How shall my virtues spread below his heavenly beams ; and through endless ages ripen into higher powers !

" Here comes a body of clergymen : this is accounted a laborious farmer : that a bright poet : that a fine orator : that a great wit : this a noted critic : and that a polite gentleman." How much superior is the character of a faithful minister of Jesus Christ ! Woes me ! do the clergy of this place think themselves more than sufficient for the work of the gospel ? Or, are fields, in their esteem, more precious than immortal souls ;—than a divine Saviour ?—Will the wisdom of words win men to Christ ?—What advantage hath a wit above others, but that he hath a greater freedom to play the fool ?—And pray, of how little use are the most of critics ! how often, like proud fools, they take offence at every trifle ! how often, like rats swarming about the best cheese, do they especially attack the choicest books ! how often they observe so much upon others, that they take no heed to themselves ! how often, by misleading our judgment, do they more mischief than the bad writer, who only tires our patience ! how often, by pardoning absurdities in themselves, which

they cannot suffer in others, do they testify that they are more willing to be fools, than to see others so! —Is not common sense more useful than fine sense? how often doth a polite gentleman signify no more, but one who gallants the ladies? one who is ready to practise crimes, the most abhorrent to nature, and contradictory to Christian faith? one that blasphemes his Maker, or smiles at the man who doth it? and yet is ready to run him through who speaks evil of his friend.—Lord, let us have nothing to do with clergy who know better how to manage farms, than to wrestle with God, and deal with hardened and wounded consciences; that give us fine language, and airy flights, rather than rousing lectures of the corruption of our nature, and of a crucified Christ; or who value the company of the graceless great, more than that of the debased saint.

“Yonder lies a noisome carcase: what dogs, what ravens conspire to devour it!” Humbling image of a sinner! he lies dead in trespasses and sins; Satan blinds his mind, and digs out his eyes: all around are ready to tear and destroy him.—How like this carcase is the noisome food of wicked men! —How like it is a reproached person! how readily every reviler around combines to tear his reputation! —Lord, if I am called a bad man, let me silence calumny, by ever doing what is praise-worthy; and revenge my reproaches, by shining brighter in good works.

“Here comes my friend’s son: he is bound apprentice to one who bids fair to ruin his morals.” Alas! how few ponder to whom they hire or bind themselves, or their seed! If we choose not to make

a present of ourselves to Satan, let us beware of voluntary entering into the families of such as are openly his children. Lord, what a long apprenticeship to him did my soul serve ! what awful progress did I make in his business, going astray from the womb, speaking lies, hating God, murdering myself and my neighbour ! Now may Jesus teach me, and this youth, to number our days, work out our salvation, and trade with heaven.

“ Now I approach to the city wall.” Ten thousand times higher and stronger is God, the wall of defence to his people ; and, by his assistance, they overleap walls of difficulty and opposition. “ Yonder are the castle and bulwarks.” Salvation will God appoint to his people, for walls and for bulwarks ; himself is their rock, their fortress, and their shield. “ Here the laborious masons repair the breach.” Sin is as a breach breaking out in an instant ; it threatens us with sudden destruction. By the line, the rule of inspiration, gradually build up thyself, my soul, in thy most holy faith, and on Jesus as thy sure foundation.—Craftsmen’s brotherly affection, and their tender care of the poor, I highly applaud : but is not the swearing of an oath, to constitute them brethren, too solemn, too like a profanation of the great name of our God ? is it not a heinous sin to swear to the observation of trifles ; or to conceal that which, for ought we know, it may be for the honour of God to publish ? Can it be lawful to use a part of inspiration in almost the manner of a charm ? Can it be innocent, to impose a dubious, or sinful oath, upon unthinking youth, who understand it not ? or to take it in a superstitious fashion ?

“I enter the gate.” As the breaker up, and fore-runner for me, hast thou, Jesus, gone up, and passed through the gates of death and the grave, and to the new Jerusalem, that I might follow in mine order: but, alas! alas! that I have but just passed the gate of conversion! and that when I travel so long an earthly journey in a few hours, my motion heavenward for many years is scarce discernible!

“Here numerous signs, on side-posts and upper lintels, declare what is to be sold within.” Our Redeemer’s sign is the glorious gospel: it exhibits and declares what is to be enjoyed in the chambers of presence; and in the house eternal in the heavens. Ministers are his sign, that bear his name before the Gentiles; preach his unsearchable riches! and, alas! too many of them, like signs, invite others to go in, taste, and see that God is good; but never do it themselves.

“Yonder stands a fellow who lately ran off from his master.” Alas! there be many professors now-a-days, that break away, every man, from Jesus, our adored Master; that go back and walk no more with him.—But bless the Lord, O my soul, that when, times without number, I have outrun his service, he hath pursued me; and, by rods of trouble, and cords of love, brought me back to it. “From within this house, I hear the cries of a travailing woman.” Is this the bitter fruit of woman’s first eating of the forbidden tree? Is this, O Jesus, the emblem of thy soul-travail in the garden and place of a skull? O thy pangs, thy throes, at love’s delivery of a new-born world of ransomed men! O see thy seed, and remember thine anguish no more, for joy that men—

children to God are born into this new world. Do thou, JEHOVAH, cry like a travailing woman, till, in thy providence, thou bring forth salvation to all the ends of the earth.—Let me, by fervent supplication, and earnest endeavours, travail as in birth, till Christ be formed in the hearts of all around me.

“Yonder child runs from his correcting parent.” How often in trouble do I flee from the Lord, rather than to him! O pursue, and bring me from Bashan hill, and from the sea’s devouring depths. “This child, I suppose, hath hurt his health by eating unripe fruit.” And how often have I hurt my soul, by hastily catching at unripe deliverances and enjoyments! But, ever-ripe Jesus, never can I feed too early on thee.

“Here the baker, having heated his oven, fires his loaves.” Bread of life, how wast thou fired in JEHOVAH’s indignation; that for us there might be bread enough, and to spare!—How justly shall the day of vengeance burn as an oven, upon all them that despise thee; and all that do wickedly be cast into it!

“Here is a laboratory; and yonder a distillery.” By what wonderful operations do men prepare medicines and cordials for our body.—By what stupendous work dost thou, Lord, provide for the health and refreshment of our soul! For our sakes, Jesus’ heart was melted amidst his bowels: good is brought out of evil: sweet out of bitter; and “all things made to work for good to them that love God, and are called according to his purpose.”

“Here is a printing-house.” Our Redeemer’s church and ordinances are his printing-house; where

multitudes are cast into the gospel-mould, and have his law imprinted on their heart.—O for the time, when he shall cast off a thousand copies in a day ! Woes me, Lord, I am a sorry proof-sheet, with a sad errata : but examine and try me, and put me, again and again, into the press of a fellowship with thyself, till I get the finishing stroke, and perfectly correspond with my type, the word, and my original copy, the Christ of God. Thrice happy, that thy types, like these in China, stand ever ready to cast off new copies !

“ Here dwells the engraver.” Blessed be the Lord, that engraven as in leaves of brass, the mighty promise shines : may I, by faith, lay it in my bosom, press it down with prayer, till it be engraven on my heart. And, blessed be the Lord, that my sins, engraven as with a pen of iron, and point of a diamond, are blotted out ; and the requests of my heart are engraven in the rock, engraven in the heart of God for ever.

“ Yonder is the high-school ; and, a little beyond, “ the college.” O to be thoroughly entered to Jesus’ school ! Let his word be nearer to me than my friends, dearer to me than my life, sweeter to me than my liberty, and more pleasant than all earthly comforts : let it, as God’s candle, search all the corners of my heart. If it threaten, let me tremble and repent : if it promise, let me believe, and receive ; if it command, let me obey.—As Jesus came from his Father’s bosom, so his promises come from his side. His church cannot live without faith, nor faith without promises. Blessed be God, that though we have less power to stand than Adam had,

yet we have better promises, sealed and confirmed by the oath of the Father, the blood of the Son, and witness of the Spirit.—O to enter to the college of the “general assembly of the first-born from among men!” to obtain that liberal education, which lieth in seeing God as he is ; no more through a glass darkly, but face to face ! Thrice blessed heavenly state, in which God will never hide his face, nor sin nor Satan show theirs ; where it this day without a cloud to darken it, and without a night to end it ;—where all good is present, and all evil absent ;—where all God’s servants are abundantly satisfied with all his dispensations, in bringing them to it ; and where their grace, begun here, shall be perfected in glory. Let my aim therefore be, to be now as rich in grace, and as much for the glory of God, as possible ; that my eternal happiness and honour may be the more abundant.

“What a mighty noise this copperer makes with “his work.” Ah ! how many professors are there, whose true motto is, Noise without action ! “Here lives the tobacconist : how far he fetcheth “his foreign plant ! what labour he bestows upon “it ; and what revenue it brings to the government !” Thou Plant of Renown, from what distant region camest thou to the lower parts of the earth ! how cut down ! how pressed by the Father’s vengeance, that thou mightest purge off our inward filth, and heal our hearts ! what revenues of glory for ever redound to God our Sovereign, through thee !

“Here is a play-house.” Unhappy lodging, basely doomed to be Satan’s synagogue ; a theatre of

rebellion against God thy Maker ; a nursery of lust, lies, and vanity ! Shall mortals dearly purchase room in thy pit, thy galleries, to fit themselves for destruction ? shall they with pleasure listen several hours to Satan's buffoons, who have not one hour's patience to bestow upon the ambassador of Christ ?—Christians by name, come not near her door ; turn away from it : it is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death : she is but a garnished sepulchre ; the dead while they live go here ; and are not her former guests, mostly, in the depths of hell ? Lies, lust, mockery at sin, are not fit pastimes for the followers of the holy Jesus, “ the way, the truth, and the life : Avoid filthiness, foolish talking, and jesting, which is not convenient :” Retire, read your Bibles, and be gay ; there truths abound, of sovereign aid to peace and cheerfulness.

“ Here comes my old acquaintance : I fear I must stop a little at his house : how he fawns upon and flatters me ! though, were my back turned, he would call me plenty of ill names.” Let my soul trust as little to a smiling world, and a flattering heart, as I do to this man's oiled words : let me be ashamed of their praise, as I would be of his, did I believe him in earnest.—But, friend, why all this waste, this prostitution of praise ? like ambergrease, a small whiff of it is agreeable, but a whole lump of it held to the nose strikes down one with the stink.—Is it polite behaviour to neglect the praises of thy Maker ; and to blow up a croaking toad ? are you so utter a stranger to yourself, as to be ignorant that vain glory needs none to blow the coals ; and that this lust gathers strength, even by

the defeat of her companions?—O the irresistible power of self-flattery ! how few guard against this !

“ How the flies now swarm in this house !” Ah ! how principalities, powers, and spiritual wickednesses in high places, abound in our heart and in the church ; especially in the harvest season of gospel-grace, or of near approaches to death !—how Beelzebub, the god of flies, haunts the habitation of the wicked, and waits to fetch them away into everlasting perdition !

“ Yonder fly hath seated himself upon the surface of
 “ a rough stone. Pitiful insect, he hath not an eye
 “ to take in the beauty and symmetry of the whole
 “ house, but contents himself with the prospect of
 “ a few hairs-breadth of the rough side of a single
 “ stone.” Just picture of a deist : This puny animal has not sense enough to consider revelation in her whole extent and glorious connection : he can only discern a few seeming contradictions, or dark expressions, in the surface of a particular part of the sacred page. These, like other fools, he hath an itch to deride. Poor soul, he cannot discern the excellency of the Christian religion, perhaps can scarce read a chapter of the New Testament ; but he can rail and laugh : Let him remember, that the man who rails at religion, and confutes it with bold jests, doth not make religion, but himself ridiculous ; because he sports with his life. To utter contumelies, especially of this kind, is to make fools merry, and wise men sick. “ How the flies swarm about this
 “ honey ! more of them could be caught with an
 “ ounce of it, than with a ton of vinegar.” Soft words most effectually gain our friend.—Not by the angry threatenings of thy law, not by thine awful terrors,

but by thy promises, the sweet discoveries of thy love, didst thou, Jesus, gain my heart ! How often a word from God, a look from Christ, and a touch from the Spirit, have broken my heart ! How often his soft mercies have melted it !

“ Yonder a poor man is carried to prison for “ debt.” Think, my soul, into what fearful prison of judgment and of hell, God casts them who are deep in debt to his justice, by the broken covenant of works ; and refuse remission of sin, through the blood of his Son !—Oh ! Sovereign grace, be thou my only creditor : the more I owe thee, the more thou wilt love, caress, and exalt me : Jesus’ bosom and throne is the sole, the sweet prison appointed for thy bankrupts : may I be the deepest of the countless number.

“ It is not safe for my soul to continue in this “ man’s company.” For who are next to knaves, but those who voluntarily converse with them ? A companion of fools shall be destroyed.—And when I am necessarily in the company of evil men, I am like one travelling with an oppressive burden on his back. “ Adieu, Sir, I am obliged to you for your kindness.” But may God, by convincing your conscience, enlightening your mind, renewing your will, and forgiving your sin, speedily lay you under deeper obligations to him.

“ How extremely impudent is this beggar ! I “ served him as I went in ; and yet now he bawls “ for more.” Imitate him, my soul, in thy dealing with Christ ; the more he gives, accost him the more vehemently for further supply. Whenever thou receivest one favour, post back to his throne,

to ask a greater.—Lord, give me the full, the immediate enjoyment of thyself, and I will never ask more. But till then, let me fill up all the void spaces of my time with meditation and prayer.—They are safest who live most in secret prayer, proceeding from a broken heart. If my prayers ascend to the throne of grace, my person shall quickly ascend to the throne of glory. Believing prayers can turn all the promises of God into performance. May God pour his spirit on me, that I may pour out my heart before him. If I live without prayer, or pray without life, I have not the Spirit of God. If my heart be willing, my cries for help will be frequent and earnest. Waiting upon God will abate my unnecessary cares, and sweeten my necessary ones: Let, therefore, nothing get between me and my prayers, and get nothing between heaven and my prayers, but Christ. If the Spirit of faith teach me to pray earnestly, it will teach me to wait patiently; assuring me, that the mercies which are in the Lord's hand, will be given to me in the Lord's time. If I spend my days in faith and prayer, I shall end them in peace and comfort.

“Here people return from electing their magistrates.” Alas! how often do men prostitute their conscience, when so employed! God alone can conceive what horrid scenes of bribery, by drink, money, advancement to posts, or the like, are now too common in Britain! How can his curse fail to attend such elections, or the means which procured them. And what shameful and damning discoveries shall take place at the last day? how seldom men fearing God, and hating covetousness, are pre-

ferred, either for parliament, cities, burghs, &c. ? how few rulers are a terror to those who profane the name and Sabbath of the Lord, and a praise to them that do well ! “ Perhaps, to-night, the old magistrates “ will solemnly resign their badges of power to the “ new, and wish them joy of their office.” Happy day, and holy mount, where Moses and Elias, representing the law and the prophets, resigned their power to Jesus, and wished him joy of his work !—Happy day, when my lusts were obliged to resign their authority to him ; when my whole soul wished him endless joy of his work !

“ Yonder a criminal hangs on a gibbet ” Sin, thou abominable thing ! Is this the reward, the best reward of thy bold friends ? What profit have we of those things whercof we are at last ashamed ?—Be astonished, my soul, that divine providence hath not permitted my lusts to bring me to this shameful end !—Be pained, that they brought my Saviour to hang on an accursed tree !—but, O how the charming sound *forgive* dwelt on his dying lips ! how every groan, every gaping wound, cried, Father, Let the sinful rebels, let my murderers live : “ Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

“ Here the fruitful garden fully repays her master's care.” Lord, not I, but my Surety sufficiently repays thy care, thy pains for me. Depending on his righteousness and strength, let me ever study, by word and deed, to proclaim myself thy distinguished debtor. May men take knowledge of me, that I have been with Jesus. “ Here the trees, especially one whose form is awkward, are laden with “ fruit.” O the riches and sovereignty of God's

grace ! “ Not many wise men after the flesh ; not many mighty, not many noble are called : but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise ; and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty ; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen : and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are : that no flesh might glory in his presence : but that he that glorieth might glory in the Lord.” How often do private Christians, who are despised and overlooked, possess more real grace than such as are in the highest stations, and have the most famous character and shining appearances in the church ! “ Some fruit here, and part “ of corn in the field, have been shaken out by the “ late wind.” How often do winds of temptation cast down many who have real grace ; and make shocking discoveries of those that want it ! “ How “ quickly fallen fruit spoils, if it continue on the “ ground !” How fearfully do professors’ continuance in apostacy, and earthliness, discover and promote the rottenness of their heart ! “ How busily the gatherer gathers in his fruit before winter !” How often God takes away the righteous from the evil to come ! May I lay up great store of thoughts and prayers in heaven, before my winter of affliction and death. O to lay in Christ, lay up Christ, and lay out for Christ ! “ Little of this fruit will eat well, “ till it lie and be mellowed.” By lying in the chamber of a Redeemer’s love, let my soul be fitly mellowed for the feast above : let his balmy Spirit breathe on my fruits, untaught to fail ; and let the grave prepare my body for endless bliss. “ How fast the

“leaves fall off this tree!” How fast do windy trials strip professors of outward flourish and shadowy piety! How fast death strips the world of her once flourishing inhabitants! strips men of unsubstantial appearances and earthly enjoyments! Lord, may it find the root of the matter in me. And fast, fast may my sins, and my carnal cares, fall off me, now when I am near death!

“Yonder stands the last remains of the embattled beans and roving peas: their pods conceal the nourishing product.” How hid is the joy, the wealth of real religion! let not me look at the things that are seen, which are temporal; but at the things which are not seen, which are eternal. Let my soul be one of God’s hidden ones, one of his sons, all of whom are like himself. All believers are children of the same Father, members of the same Son, and habitations of the same Spirit; all fellow-citizens, fellow-servants, fellow-soldiers, fellow-travellers to the same country, and fellow-heirs of the same everlasting fulness. None are so fully acquainted, closely connected, or so much endeared to one another, as real Christians. Notwithstanding all their lesser differences, they do, or ought to love one another as friends in different garbs!—Heart-work is better than head-work;—fervent charity than warm disputes. It is better to be a melancholy saint, than a mad-sinner. If saints have doubts, fears, and groans, they have sufficient joys in, and at the end of their way, to overbalance them. Though sin live in them, it cannot reign, nor they live in it. The more they are acquainted with themselves, the more readily will they prefer their neighbours; and while they

live like saints, they will pray like sinners. Their sins can never triumph, their graces never die, nor their souls ever be lost, or separated from the love of Christ. Satan can as soon pluck Christ out of heaven, as pull him out of his throne in a believer's heart.

“ There stand the ranked cabbage; chiefly valuable for their large and solid heart.” As my heart is before God, so much am I, and no more: Lord Jesus, enlarge and fill it with thyself and thy grace. Alas! what odd hearts are to be found with men! Some are toy-shops, filled with fantastic heads, ribbons, laces, fans, silks, rings, and other gewgaws: some are a confused chaos of coaches, cards, play-houses, puppet-shows, lap-dogs, guinea-pigs, squirrels, monkeys, beaus, coquettes: some are shelves for romances and plays: some are stables for cattle, and folds for sheep: some ships, or warehouses for goods! some iron chests and repositories for cash: some stews of abominable filthiness: some smoky furnaces of malice and envy: some dunghills of earthly-mindedness.—And are not those things which fill the heart, worshipped in God's stead? O horrid idolatry!

“ The snails and vermin have ruined these greens.” By what insignificant means could God ruin our outward enjoyments! how wretched a portion is this world, that can be so easily marred!—How often have my indwelling lusts left me scarce a shadow or stump of grace! how withered and worm-eaten have they rendered my conversation! May God speedily purge them out, otherwise they will eat my soul through and through, and fill me with filth and pain.

"Here some gentlemen play at the golf." How innocent this diversion ! pity it is, that it, or any lawful recreation, should be the prostituted occasion of professors' intimacy with the openly wicked, and the introduction of unnecessary drinking. "What fine strokes do some give beyond others !" To be no more than as good as our neighbours, is to be very bad. Lord Jesus, let thy love strike me home to thyself ; and may I, with skill and force, drive temptations far from me. "Here one of the spectators shows his neighbour his Baskerville's Virgil." Why is it not as polite to pull out a New Testament out of one's pocket as a heathen classic ? and to extol a rapture of inspiration, as readily as a comparatively mean expression of Horace or Homer ? Are we ashamed of our Bible, because God is the author of it !

"Yonder they level an eminence." Blessed Jesus, let thy love level every mountain of guilt, pollution, rebellion, temptation, trouble, and desertion, that riseth between thee and my soul. By thy grace, make insignificant worm *me* to thresh them down, and make them small as chaff. "How hath this row of large oaks exhausted the sap of the earth, that nothing contiguous can prosper !" And how fearfully doth earthly-mindedness, or any other prevailing lust, exhaust the sap of my soul, that no grace, no good thought, word, or deed, can thrive near it ! "How greedily yonder swine devour the acorns, without ever looking up to the branches whence they fell !" How like these, atheistical sinners, who receive God's bounty, without regard to him-

self ; and who eat and drink at his board, without asking his blessing, or rendering him thanks !

“ Here some persons in coaches, and others on horseback, take the sea air for their health.” For thine, my soul, ride in the chariot of the wood of Lebanon, the new covenant ; and on the white horse of the everlasting gospel : let the improvement of these, by faith and love, the fresh gales of divine influence from off the ocean of redeeming love, recover me from my consumption : refresh my spirit, strengthen my heart, restore my soul, and make my flesh fresher than that of a child. “ Now the birds of passage betake themselves to warmer climates : what pinioned nations come and go ! what trans-migrations here ! ” In the view of approaching winters of trouble and death, fly, my soul, to the warm climates of nearness to thy God. O for such views of his perfections, as to make me esteem them all in the highest manner ! to behold his goodness as rendering his majesty amiable ; and his majesty as making his mercy wonderful ;—his holiness, as inclining him to dwell in, and sanctify the poor in spirit. His majesty is so great, that he can admire nothing ; and his mercy so great, that he cannot condemn the meanest sinner. Let me believe him for his faithfulness, love him for his goodness, praise him for his greatness, revere him for his majesty, fear him for his power, and trust him for his wisdom, and adore him for his holiness and justice ; and whatsoever pleaseth him, let it please me. Let views of him begin my saintship on earth, and perfect it in heaven.—Without his powerful presence,

I sink into nothing ; without his gracious presence, I fall into sin ; without his merciful presence, I plunge into hell. His love must set me on my work, make me persevere in it, and then graciously reward me for it. As I hated him without a cause, he loved me without a cause. All my love to him is but the production and the reflection of his love to me.—Thrice astonishing ! he loves me in his Son ; loves me as he loves his Son ; and will love me as long as he will love his Son ! “ The sea-mews betake themselves to the inland parts : perhaps a sign that no “ herring-drove, but a storm approacheth.” When ministers become careless and earthly-minded, applying themselves to civil business, storms of wrath approach, and few souls of men lie fair to be caught in the gospel-net. Divine director of these fishes and fowls to seek their food, save me from waiting on shadowy ordinances, where Jesus is not held forth as the only, the all-sufficient portion of my soul : let not me, with too many, dream, that sight of church-walls, and hearing of fine language, can satisfy an immortal spirit. Would not men reckon me a murderer, should I so attempt to nourish my body ?

“ Yonder is a crowd of people who attend the “ neighbouring spaw, to drink or bathe in it.” Blessed Jesus, mineral Well, great Spaw, suited to all our maladies, let us daily bathe in thy blood ; and abundantly drink of the influence of thy Spirit : O the blind, halt, maimed, withered, and consumptive sinners that have been hereby healed ! May virtue proceed from thee to heal us also, of whatsoever disease we have.

“ What crowds have to-day attended the race

“ here !” Alas ! that men should so abuse their beasts, endanger the rider’s life, fondly behold vanity, and accompany with the profane swearer or drunkard ! While such fuel of corruption is in me, avoid, my soul, every occasion of blowing it into a flame ; but laying aside every weight of lust, guilt, or anxious care, and especially that which doth so easily beset me : run with patience the race of gospel-holiness, which God in his word hath set before me, looking unto Jesus, as the author and finisher of my faith, and the pattern of my life.—What noble prize, what incorruptible crown of glory shall I thus gain !

“ Here they make glass: its original is stones, sand, kelp, and such briny materials: by what grinding, melting, and polishing, they transform it into the useful, the transparent substance !” Think, my soul, O the tremendous grinding and melting of the Son of God in the likeness of sinful flesh, to prepare the glazen sea of his righteousness, mingled with the fiery, the purifying influence of his Spirit and love ! to prepare the glass, the glazen sea of the gospel of our salvation ; and of a pure church, actuated by the fire of holy zeal ; and to prepare a bottle for God to put my tears in !

“ Here comes a lawyer !” Lord Jesus, let my law-suits lie before the Father’s throne. Into thy hand, as mine only advocate, I devolve all my pleas, and hope for a good issue thereof: I am so poor, that I can afford no fee ; so ignorant, that I understand not my case ; and so wicked, that I am innocent of no crime : but let thy grace answer for my poverty ; thy skill for my ignorance : and thy blood to every charge that an omniscient God, an awak-

ened conscience, or an enraged devil, can lay against me.

“A little below is the old ruinous bridge.” Just emblem of the covenant of works, which, being partly founded on the sandy bottom of created goodness, fell, and great was the fall of it. All mankind were ruined in the one man, by whom sin entered into the world. Alas! that men, by continued attempts to pass over it into heaven; so often plunge themselves into the current of everlasting wrath! What is our present world, and our life here, but a bridge full of holes, through which numbers daily fall into the depths of death; some in respect of age before us, some behind us, and others at our side! Yet with what heedless unconcern do most push forward, till themselves fall, and are hurried down into the ocean of eternity!

“But here, at stupendous expense, and with “amazing art, is this new bridge reared upon solid “rock.” With what display of God’s manifold wisdom, at what expense of divine love, obedience, and blood, art thou, blessed bridge of the new covenant, founded on Godhead, and thrown over betwixt heaven and hell! My soul, never hazard thyself on the old while the new is at hand.—What but ignorance of God, and raging enmity against the Saviour, can tempt the legal heart to do so? Legal preacher, extoller of human abilities and work, what but this tempts thee to seduce men to their eternal ruin?

“Yonder is a bee-hive: with what labour they “collect their honey from the countless flowers of “the field and garden? with what nice art, from

“poisonous herbs, they extract the healing dew?
“in what curious cells they deposit their store
“against the approaching winter! how angrily they
“buz, and sting him who attempts to rob them of
“their provision!” My soul, make these thy pattern: unweariedly collect nourishment and medicine from every promise, ordinance, and providence; extract good out of evil; let sins, let sorrows, push thee from self to Jesus: lay up God’s truth and grace in thy heart; commit every good thing to Christ, that he may keep it for thee against that day: vigorously oppose every attempt to rob thee of thy treasure. “Why do honied roses grow on thorns; “why honey formers wear a sting!” All created pleasures must be dashed with pain: how often men feel the stings of pleasure, and the pangs of love! Nothing is altogether lovely but my God. “Perhaps “to-night this hive shall be snatched and fixed on “sulphur, robbed, and murdered, that the spoiler, “man, may enjoy their delicious store.” In the evening of the world was not Jesus slain, that his sweet treasures of grace and glory might be given to his betrayers and murderers! Nor shall devils or men, or any other creatures, ever be able to rob me of my share thereof, laid up in the promise for me: I shall not die, but live, and feed for ever on honey from the Rock of Ages.—O death where is now thy sting? was not my Jesus thy plague? O grave, where is thy victory? was not he thy destruction?

“Perhaps a wasp’s nest is at hand. How curiously
“these insects rear their combs! how often they
“attempt to rob the laborious bees! afflict such as

“ are at peace with them ! desperately sting the destroyer of their combs ! and, by neglecting to provide for the winter, ruin themselves and their seed !” Just figure of sinners, and their lusts ! How craftily these commit and conceal wickedness ! how they oppose whatever is of God, neglect to provide for eternity, murder the souls of themselves and their seed ; and with rage prosecute him who goeth about to dislodge, or spoil them of opportunity to do mischief.

“ Here is an ant hill : how sagaciously these insects provide for the winter ! with what toil they collect their corn ! how averse, how ashamed to return empty ! how wisely they dry their stores at the sun by day ! but if near a pigeon-house, or an habitation of birds, at the moon by night ! how careful of their young ! and when the rain delugeth their upper chambers, how deep they lodge both progeny and provision !” Learn, my soul, their ways, and be wise. In time let me provide for death and eternity : let me be ashamed to return empty from any ordinance, any promise : with care let me discern, and redeem the time : let me take heed, lest I lose what I have wrought : let me cherish and watch over my tender grace : let me diligently train up my children in the fear of God. In every danger, with the deepest humility, let me lodge myself, and all that I have, in the secret place of the Most High ; that when the hail of temptation, or judgment, comes down on the forest, I may be laid in a low place. Ye sons of sloth, ye careless daughters, behold how busy all nature is around you, and reproacheth you for your idleness ! How oddly

you complain that time lieth heavy on your hand ! and that you often know not what to do with yourselves ! When the all-dreadful Judge shall sift you at his tribunal, and enquires how you are employed on earth, what can you answer !—Is it that you played at crimp ? dressed jointed babies ? read plays and romances ? dressed your body, and did eat your victuals ? shewed a solemn, or a smiling face in every street ? or perhaps so criticised on the faults of others, that you could find no opportunity to amend your own ? No doubt, some will almost approach the Judge laughing, singing, and dancing ; but with terror shall his tremendous frown, his awful sentence, spoil your mirth.—Think, my soul, earth is a great mole-hill, where human emmets round the heap, crowd and bustle in a thousand forms of strife and toil, to purchase wealth, or fame, an empty bubble, or sordid dust.—What is fame, but a fancied life on others breath ? what is wisdom, but to know our neighbours' faults, and feel our own ? Sure pride was never made for ignorant, sinful, wretched man. How should we smile to hear of honorary distinctions among pismires ! and that the rest made way for an emmet of quality, with noble blood in his veins ! It is not for the followers of a humble Saviour, to fancy there is any thing great in pride and lightness of spirit. Let Jesus, let Christianity alone exalt me, and give me an universal greatness of soul : How this strengthens and sublimates my powers, branches out my soul, as it were, into new faculties, and makes me like the angels in heaven !—What but the descent of the Son of God, what but the rays of his truth, have made the barbarous nations more polite than ancient

Greece ? What but his descent into my soul, makes me wise unto salvation : a fearer of God, a true friend of man ?

“ What thousands of conies lodge in this warren !
“ how at the sound of my voice, the timorous tribe
“ crowd to their subterraneous mansions ! how bare
“ and withered they have made the whole surface
“ round !” Alas ! what numbers of men are earthly, sensual, devilish ! how, in trouble, this earth is their rest, their refuge, their all ! how they run to earthly cares, and carnal courses, when God speaks to them in his word and providence ! Ah ! how an earthly mind withers our soul, renders it barren ; withers ordinances, makes them unfruitful ; withers our frames, that they quickly fade away ; withers our profession and practice, till they be scarce a shadow ; withers our outward enjoyments, that they cannot give contentment !

“ How hath the mole cast up this fat field !” How rarely do men possess fulness of outward blessings, without becoming the prey of an earthly, carnal mind !
“ A worm is the glorious prize for which the mole
“ hath so wearied herself.” How often do carnal covetous men, weary themselves for very vanity ; waste time and strength in pursuing that pleasure, profit, or honour, which at the end will beget a gnawing conscience ; bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder ? “ Yonder the mole-catcher sets his traps.” Lord Jesus, hide thy word richly in my heart, that my carnal thoughts and desires may be thereby taken and destroyed.

“ Here, I suppose, the too fat pastures hath swol-
“ len and killed this fat lamb.” How hazardous

for our soul ! how ready to swell us with pride, is an abundant affluence in the days of youth ! “ Yonder the full-bellied cattle prostrate themselves on the earth for rest.” The more of this world the carnal man enjoys, the more his belly, his heart, and soul cleave to it. Nay, alas ! after feeding on the fat pasture of ordinances, how often have I permitted my heart to seek ease and rest on the earth !

“ Lately bloomed the heath, which scarce knows when the good of spring or summer cometh.” And are not some called at the eleventh hour, and born to Christ out of due time ? My soul, am not I much so ? “ How quickly the flocks feed upon the blooming vegetable !” How beneficial many persons and things prove, from which we once expected no service ! let me, therefore, never despise nor injure the most insignificant : a time may come, when they may be very useful, or very hurtful to my interest.

“ Here the reapers ply their business to purpose : I suppose they have got their ale ; or to-night they intend to finish their harvest ;—here the piper with his tune animates them to their work.” When, with open mouth, I drink out of the wells of salvation, am brought to Jesus’ banquetting house, have a near prospect of glory, and have the joy of the Lord for my strength, how I abound in the work of the Lord !

“ Here the steward pays off the reapers ! he acts under authority, and must account for whatever he distributes.” Think, my soul, of God’s judging the world, by the man whom he hath ordained, to render to every man according to his works.—O

let me dispose of my time and talents as I am persuaded he would do if in my place. Ye sons of men, remember you are stewards, not lords, of whatever you enjoy ; use it as those who must give an account : Ye ministers of Christ, give saints and sinners their portion in due seasons : hazard not your soul by discouraging the righteous, or flattering the wicked.

“ Here the Husbandman gradually fetcheth home his crop ; it is much more bulky and valuable than when it was carried forth into seed ; yet perhaps he forgets himself indebted to God for the increase.” Gradually doth God, by his carriages, his chariots of angels, fetch home his chosen saints to his heavenly garner ; gradually are men carried to their long home. But alas ! how many are the worse, not the better of life ! how little holiness, nay, how little honesty is in the world ? it is used as a perfume, a small quantity of which is made to go far. How many are intent upon offending God as long as they can, and only purpose to become serious when the weakness of old age renders them incapable to bear arms against him ; or the storms of trouble and death force them upon him against their will ! To how poor account is our life spent ! how much of it is wasted in sleep ! how much in sickness and infirmity ! how much in recreation, madness, and folly ! how much in mischief ! how much in we know not what ! how many live, as if their great work was to excel others in devouring the product of the earth ; in possessing the puny trinkets of pride and luxury, or the excitements of injustice and violence ! how many act, as if rich clothes reformed

the heart, and choice food nobilitated the blood; and the more God gives them of what they love, they hate him the more heartily; love the gift, but hate the giver!—What a cup mingled with bitter ingredients is our life! and doth any thing create us so much vexation, as our placing on creatures that love which is due to God?—My soul, thine outward accommodations are but a cloak for winter; let not me wish the winter were lengthened, because I have a cloak, but long, long, for thy ingathering to Jesus: and, O may he carry me out of life much better than he brought me in.

“Already this industrious farmer hath got his corn cut down, and gathered in; perhaps he now feasts his reapers.” O happy day, when Jesus cuts down his saints by death! when he sends forth his angels, and gathers them to him at his second coming! then shall he make for them “a feast of fat things, of wines on the lees; of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. Let us be glad and rejoice, for the Lamb’s feast of ingathering shall come: the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” “On yonder fields the harvest is scarce begun! to what hazard, from wind and rain, will the crop be exposed before it be got in!” O the hazard of slothful delays! how many by these are ruined for time and eternity! how often the sinner of eighty cannot repent, because he is cut off by an untimely death! “Here the gleaner winnows his corn; poverty obligeth him to thresh it out for present use.” With

what threshing afflictions, and winnowing influences, doth God separate our chaff of corruption from the solid grain of our grace?—Because I am daily at the point of starving, let me improve every ordinance for present supply.

“How warm is this valley, while yonder hills are covered with snow!” Alas! how are proud professors exposed to the early storms of divine wrath! and how much happier is a gracious state, and the lot of an humble saint, than that of the most exalted sinner! “Here comes the travelling merchant, with a burden so heavy, as would certainly break his back, were he not used to it. Perhaps he does not yet know where, nor how he must lodge to-night.” Alas! how many, by living under the power of guilt, lust, and carnal care, render themselves insensible of the burden! How many, in the evening of life, know not how, nor where, they must be lodged for ever! “Here the just-kindled green furze, are immediately extinguished by their own natural sap.” How often, my soul, when I have begun spiritual meditation, hath the commenced glow been quenched by the force of my inward corruption! Heavenly thoughts are not inhabitants, but wayfaring men, which turn aside to tarry for a moment. Ah! I do not lodge in honour, but am like the beasts that perish.

“Here my Lord * * * * passeth by: what homage is given him!” It is only man, however, who respects outward greatness: nature brought his lordship into the world as naked as I; affords him no other sun, moon, nor stars, than she doth me: diseases, death, and hell, are as ready to prey upon

him, as on me : nor doth God open his arms of special favour, or heaven her gates of eternal happiness, to him, a whit more readily than to yonder indigent. Homage is given to him, just as to the Egyptian ass, which bare the goddess ; it is not done to himself, but to his burden of power and wealth. Wise men regard us for true excellency and dignity : fools regard us for our fine clothing and great riches.—Worldly things are very unequally divided, to our view : the one half of mankind know not how the other lives ; and very often, the best deserving have but the smallest share. Every where the worst persons and things are most common : nor, taking things at their best, do I know if hell is more unhappy in respect of earth, than earth is in respect of heaven. Why then should I debase and toil myself, to get into the office of a petty treasurer of a small share of the dunghill ? let me be God's steward to earthly things, which it is shameful and wicked to procure, in order to keep ; and a treasurer only to himself and his grace. Never did I taste any thing earthly that well deserved the keeping : that which was sweet in opinion, was ordinarily bitter in experience : that which was hard and long in obtaining, was easily, and often uncomfortably spent : in great numbers, evil things came posting on horseback, and went away, one by one, upon foot ; pleasures came creeping as snails, and flew away as eagles. Every earthly excellency is balanced with some great defect : how readily the man of wealth is plagued with a weak body, a drunken appetite, a proud mind, a covetous heart, an unruly family, or an envious neighbour ! If a man's memory be good, how readily

is his fancy dull ! if his imagination be sprightly, how often is his judgment weak ; or, if strong, how readily is his utterance bad !—Ah ! how wants every where prevail ! the proud man wants God ; the envious man wants the comfort of his neighbour ; the covetous man wants the pleasure of his own wealth ; and the angry man wants himself.—Suppose the world would make me her minion, as this nobleman is, she could give me no more but a smoke of honour, a shadow of wealth, a sound of pleasure, and a blast of fame ; none of which could make me live a moment longer, or a whit happier. Security and ignorance might procure me some morsels of joy, seasoned with much bitterness ; and make me, like some foolish house-keepers, live one day in extravagance and merriment, and half starve all the rest of the year : but better have little, than lose all. The world, indeed, is a great deal franker in appearance than Christ ; she, undesired, shows us her toys, and thrusts them into our hand ; while he informs us of a crown, but tells us that we must run and wait for it. Let me never pay the costly price of my soul for her vanities, rather than tarry a moment for his exceeding great reward. If God hath placed gold under the earth, let my heart tread it under her feet, lest it draw her down to the earth ; and at last sink her to the depths of hell. God forbid that I should play the hypocrite, in holding my face toward heaven, and my heart towards the earth : and while the world is so thievish as to catch at every thing, let me leave nothing to her credit, which I can, by giving in alms, and to pious purposes, justly carry away with me. To constitute me noble and

happy, no more is necessary than to improve my God and myself; which are things every where to be had. I am no fool, if I know myself: I need no more pleasure, but to content myself: no more victory, but to overcome myself; no more wealth, but to possess my soul in patience, and satisfaction in God: let me, therefore, never be so perverse, as to scorn what I have, and desire what I have not. Most men's life lieth in hoping well, bearing ill, and fearing worse; let me live by strong faith on God as my own; and I shall never be either discontented or covetous. If property balance many disadvantages, if the tender mother suffers sharp pangs, days of toil, and nights of trouble for a child, because he is her own; what inconveniences may my assured property in God balance to my soul? Let me have time and grace to enjoy him, and I defy the world to make me either poor or sad; death cannot bereave me of time, to be for ever with the Lord; nor will God, whose gifts and callings are without repentance, take away his grace from me. At my death the world will miss me little; the sun will rise as bright, the moon as gay, the stars as sparkling, and men will continue as merry and mad as ever; and I shall miss her less, when I depart to be with Christ, which is far better.

“Here is a large cask, filled either with liquor or “air.” So every man's heart, every man's life is replenished with that which is either substantial or trifling! and how many, by their care and scrupulousness about trifles, mark the wickedness of their heart! Since my spiritual appetite hath been so much weakened by the influence of airy trifles, let me feed

the oftener on Christ. O to have my whole heart filled with his fulness ! He will have all of me, or nothing : Satan indeed pretends to be more social, and to be ready to accept of a part ; but it is merely because he knows, that if he get part, God, his rival, will have nothing at all.

“ The nearer yonder rolling stone approacheth the foot of the hill, its motion is the quicker.”— When natural things draw toward the end, their motion is often most violent. Soon ripe soon rotten, is the just motto of earthly excellency. O may Satan’s violence to my soul presage his speedy adieu ; and the violence of my lusts forbode their approaching exit ! The nearer my dissolution approacheth, let me run with the more speed and vigour towards God.

“ Here is a large load of fresh fish taken from the salt sea !” Let me, like them live in the world, mortified to it ; live on earth, with my affections on things above ; live, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, holy, harmless, a child of God without rebuke. And, since almost all things partake of the soil, let me observe a due distance from wicked men, that I be not infected : let me have no companions but such as will be kind to my soul, and severe to my sins : no companions, but will either teach or learn some good of me. Let me use them as Moses did his staff : so long as they are a rod to support, or kindly correct me, let me cleave to them : but when they become serpents to tempt and sting me, let me flee from them.

“ Here is a man wonderfully famed for his learning, but surprisingly proud and contentious.—

Sad bane for the church or state, which never thrive but when peace and truth meet together ; when meekness, humility, knowledge, and zeal, kiss one another ! Anger begets, pride fosters, and covetousness confirms every schism, truly so called. Sad bane for himself ! passion, pride, and contention, render men fools that are not ; and show them to be so that are ; they are plague and torment enough for an enemy ; and render men their own executioners ! ah ! how they rack them with griefs, hopes, fears ! how they enslave them into the envy of all around ! of these, because they are above them ! of those, because they are equals ! and of the rest, because not far enough below them, nor ready enough to flatter their vanity ! How readily is this proud wicked man afraid of every thing ! of God, as his judge ! of conscience, as his accuser ! of Satan, as his tormentor ! and of every creature, as his enemy !—How readily is he hurtful in every thing ! his indiscreet, good-like actions, being little better than discreet mischiefs. Knowledge that puffeth up is of little use in the world, but to contrive error ; or to defend a bad practise, the worst of heresies. Scarce, in any age, was there more noise about knowledge, and less of what deserves the name. It is impossible I can have any sure knowledge, if I know not the things which are always nearest me, God and my heart : These I can really know no further than I choose, love, and delight in the one, and study to keep and purify the other. Ostentation, and real learning ; fine sentiment, and pompous language, seldom meet : The very conceit of knowledge hinders a man from the means to procure it, and shows him to be ignorant.

Lord, may I be always thy humble disciple, daily learning after thy divine method, of trusting, of believing and then trying ; always readier to endure injuries, than to commit or resent them ; and to conquer my enemies by praying for them, rather than by praying or fighting against them.

“ What a mixture of grain is on this ridge !” Mixture prevails every where on earth : no man, no thing, is altogether excellent : perhaps none surpass in every sin : one is reckoned a civil Atheist ; another a religious villain ; a third an honest drunkard ; another a compassionate whoremonger ; and, in fine, some detest all wrong, except that which is done to their Maker.

“ Lately this poor fellow lost his eye.” If I am a true Christian, I have a three-fold eye ; one of sense, to discern material substance ; another of reason, to discern God in it ; and a third of faith, to look at the things which are not seen, which are eternal : to discern God in Christ as my reconciled Saviour. Let me also have three guides ; Jesus, in his Spirit and truth, to go before me : and his daughters, of wisdom and charity, to attend at my sides.

“ To alight with violence on her prey, how high
“ soars yonder hawk !” That I may alight with noted force upon my sinful lusts, my spiritual foes, let my soul ascend high in the faith of Jesus and his love ; so shall I more effectually tear and tread them under my feet. But let me carefully watch against Satan, when he mounts high as an angel of light : and never push high to secure temporal enjoyments.

“ Here comes * * * * the bankrupt.” It is only

honourable to be a bankrupt to Christ. O his wonderful mercy, who at once forgives my infinite debt to himself, and becomes an eternal debtor to me! My life, my ALL, is already borrowed from him; yet I have his obligation for all his unsearchable riches; by desert I owe him MY ALL, ten thousand fold; by covenant engagement he owes HIS ALL to me.

“ In how little room hath this skilful waggoner “ turned his carriage ?” Let me rather study to live well in straitening circumstances, than to increase my wealth : to live royally amidst riches, is the honour of an estate ; to live happily on little, is the honour of the possessor. Let me never wrong myself by sullen dulness, nor lose dainties for want of stomach : If God, to mark his pleasure in his servant’s prosperity, put Adam into a garden, let me make the best of whatever I have. Were I a beggar, I would readily wish to live a monarch ; and were I a monarch, how readily, at death, would I wish that I had lived a beggar ! Only the everlasting enjoyment of God is precisely as I wish ; it is all my salvation, and all my desire. Why should not I even now find as much joy in him, as worldlings do in their forced merriment, or lewd wretches in their filthy lust ? Let me neither debase my immortal, my rational soul, to partake of the mad laughter of fools ; nor let my sullen behaviour tempt the profane world to imagine that the God whom I worship is some surly devil : let me live in God, and I shall never weary, either for want of work or pleasure. All men shall concur to do me good : These who are friends shall give me the comfort of their society, and the help of

their prayers. These, reckoned enemies, shall cause me to take heed to my ways, shall discover to me the faults overlooked by my indulgent friend; shall give me opportunity to honour myself, in rendering them love for hatred, good for evil, and blessing for cursing.

“Why doth yonder boy spur the gallopping horse?” How mad to incite sinful men to mischief! what can be a more devilish, what a more thankless office? If the transgressor be convinced, he will detest; and if he be damned, he will curse his temper.—How mad to push forward time, which already flies swifter than an eagle! “Let me escape out of the way, that I be not hurt.” Let me always take heed to myself: let me never, with Shimei, throw away my own life to seek my servant; never lose my soul to please my body; never lose heaven by grasping at this earth. I am sufficiently intelligent, honoured, and happy, if I know, overcome, and content myself: nor can any hurt me, if I assist them not; not Satan, but by my own corruption; not afflictions, but by my own impatience; not temptations, but by my own yielding; not death, but by my own sinfulness: nor sin, without my own impatience and unbelief; nor outrageous abuse, unless by study of revenge, I, like the angry bee, lose my sting, and cast away my calm temper. If the world abuse me, let me never, on that account, abuse myself with sinful anger, discomposing grief, or proud resentment: better endure a thousand wrongs, than do one: Who, by revenge, ever gained any thing more than plunging himself into deeper distress?

"Here is a fellow with his puppet-show." How wickedly he earns his bread, by imposing on his neighbours! Did he not at least derive this part of his business from Satan?—How men run to observe his pitiful trinkets, rather than to behold the Lamb of God!—Lord, how rarity, even of trifles, renders them wondered at! while the marvellous rising of thy sun, the motion of thy air, the life of our body, and union thereof with our soul, because common, are overlooked! nay, while the rare, the marvellous Saviour is contemned! "Even this sorry fellow doth not make his servant familiar with him." And am insignificant I, the meanest of God's servants, also his son and intimate friend? "How idle and useless are these fellows!" To a good man few things are more troublesome than idleness: nor is the life of any more exposed than of idlers: they are Satan's pillow, where he takes his ease; are fitly disposed for every wicked motion; and, as standing pools, soon stink with the savour of filthy lusts. And they that hide their talents in the earth, need expect no treasures in heaven.

"Yonder stands * * * * with her bastard son in her arms; foolish attendance at * * * * marriage last year; with her light dancing, and perhaps her drunkenness, issued in this." Are multitudes of our marriages now made in Satan's name, that the parties must be initiated into his service, by assembling a number of light and vain persons, on the marriage-day, to flatter, whore, drink, dance, and spue? Can I act like a tender Christian, without being ashamed to countenance such infectious rambles? durst I pray for the blessing of God on my attend-

ance? would my being there make me ready for the marriage of the Lamb? would it correspond with my profession, to be a mourner for the abounding dishonours of my God? have I forgot the filthy, the bloody issue of Dinah's attendance on a similar convention? Let none of my children be so employed, till once I want them whores, sots, or fools. How often have I seen the very money collected on such occasions, seemingly cursed of God, and quickly wasted? Satan hath too many to promote conventions of vanity and guilt, though I be none of the number. When I think seriously of death, or of accounting to God for the moments of my time, how my conscience stings me, that ever I was guilty of such conduct! How my conscience stings me, that ever I had any share in the mad races, and the inhuman sporting with animal life, so well known to the servile tribe?

“Here two neighbours disagree, and call one another bad names.” How often my soul and body are at odds! what is for the pleasure of this, is seldom for the advantage of that.—It fills me with shame to think that my better part is imprisoned in a dunghill, and that so very a trifle provokes me to variance with my fellow saints; nay, with my gracious God.—O could I love every neighbour into friendship! The solitary have fewer temptations to evil, but fewer excitements to good.—In me, let even the dead, the absent, always find a trusty friend. Christ's love, so immensely great, obligeth me to live in bankruptcy of love to him; but let me study to run bankrupt in love to none beside.—God forbid that my heart should be a hall to plot my neigh-

bour's ruin ; my hand a sword to hurt his person, a drag to catch his wealth ; or my throat an open sepulchre, to bury his fame, or rot his character. If I can say no good, let me say no evil of him ! A wounded reputation is like a rent garment, easily torn by every nail that comes in the way. In respect of their fame, some men are their own executioners : their character is rotten before their carcase : others are held infamous till they be dead, and then full heirs to their reputation ; so precarious, however precious, is a good name. To promote and maintain mine, let me take Christ to be my husband and pattern ; let me have a faithful friend, who will first hear me with evidence of affection, and then beat me with strokes of Christian reproof ; who, like sweet honey, will kindly, but sharply, search my corrupting wounds. Rather let me be contemned than flattered.

“ Yonder comes a most covetous and unthankful person.” Covetousness, pride, and envy, always render men unthankful : whoever sinfully covets more than he hath, contemns what he hath, and forgets to acknowledge it ; pride makes a man so admire himself, as to value neither God nor his gifts ; envy so draws out his heart against the felicity of his neighbour, that he sees not his own.—May unworthy I, in every thing give thanks : when, like the elephant, I have reason to start at my own likeness, how marvellous, that God should graciously look on me ! let me thank him, even for what I dare not pray for.

“ Not this charming, but the thorny, the miry path must be mine.” My near way to glory is not

through charming outward pleasure, but through much tribulation: like Jonathan's way up the rock, slippery on the one side, thorny on the other: here I must wear my black garments of mourning, and my red of bloody suffering; hereafter I shall walk with the Lamb in white, for he hath made me worthy: trouble obliges me now to sow in tears, but I shall reap in joy: scarce is it ever well with my soul, but when the rod of God is upon me: but when no good thing is easily come by, why should I baulk any to win Christ and obtain glory?—If Satan and the world oppose me much, it is a sign that my work is good; and let opposition render me resolute in it.—The longer Christ's yoke is borne, it is the easier.—How many escape trouble, just because the world loves them, and God hates them! how many, the more they strive to get out of affliction, the more they are entangled! and how many get relief worse than their distress! In fits of trouble, and acts of religion, it is an unhappy sign, if I am glad and think all is well, that they are got over.

“What languishing appears in the countenance of yonder friend! in his dying condition, let me ask of his welfare: extremity distinguishes friends.” Every ailment is a little, a begun death: to die often, to die daily, is to die well: better go forth to meet death, than loiter till he come and seize us. In the mount the Lord shall be seen: grief, trouble, and death in him, will be a sweet back-look. Far better lie under God's chastisement, than be without it. There is nothing of hell in it: and yet it is all the hell a true Christian can suffer. Chastisement is not so much threatened, as promised to a child of

God. It is a double honour to be a Christian sufferer. By affliction God separates the sin which he hates, from the soul which he loves. And the more we fear sin, the less we shall fear trouble. Sin is the poison, affliction is the physic. If God humble us, let us humble ourselves. Though his hand be against us, his heart is toward us; his providence crosseth us, but his promise blesseth us. It is good to bear temporal crosses, in order that we may wear an eternal crown. Let, therefore, our troubles stir up our graces, as well as our griefs. And let us always remember, that our enjoyments are greater than our afflictions, and our afflictions much less than our sins deserve. "What a pitiful crop this long-run field hath produced!" Alas, many professors, the longer they live, they, like the Syrian lioness, are the less fruitful: Lord, is it I?

"Now the sun sets: how quickly hath he finished his race." How quickly is my time spent, and so much of me with it! "How broadly looks this setting sun upon our terrestrial abodes!" With what triumphant smile; with what compassion to men, did Jesus die!—And how agreeable the aspect of a Christian, courageous in poverty, trouble, and death! "How sweetly the adjacent clouds are gilded by this setting sun." How pleasant to see the clouds of guilt dispelled by Jesus' death! to see troubles and sorrows made comely! and even sin made the occasion to illustrate the virtue of his blood, and riches of his grace! How sweetly doth the cheerful dying saint tincture all around with spiritual care to taste and see that God is good?—Better then is the day of death than the day of one's birth.

“ The sun being set, our side of the globe is benighted : black and deep the night begins to fall ;
“ a shade immense : all beauty is void ; distinction
“ lost. Now stung with hunger, and egged on with
“ thirst of blood, the wild beasts creep forth.”
Where, O earth, shall be thy beauty, thy distinctive honours, or enjoyments, when I am laid in the grave !
When saints die fast, what darkness and confusion doth it presage in the church ! Then the sons of violence, impurity, and error, boldly exert themselves—
When Jesus hideth himself from my soul, what darkness, danger, and confusion ensue ! no charming beauty appears in word or ordinances ; my graces cease from their labour ; and wild beasts of lust, and temptation creep abroad. But I shall see him again, and my heart shall rejoice, and my joy shall no man take from me : I shall see him even now ; I shall behold him even nigh.

“ Gradually the stars twinkle forth one after
“ another, till countless numbers pour their glory
“ from the sky.” So gradually Heaven’s inspired luminaries poured their glory on my heart : first, that evening star, that noted promise, which I hope is engraven on me “ as with a pen of iron, and point of a diamond.” Gradually have I since descried new promises, new words, new worlds of grace to me.—How much more pleasant their light, and sweeter their influence, than those of Pleiades, Arcturus, and Mazzaroth ! And what unnumbered new discoveries of God shall I for ever obtain !

“ Now I have a distant, but dim prospect of my
“ friend’s house, where I intend to lodge ! but there
“ is a deep, and dangerous valley, between me and it.”

O for clear views of the heavenly mansions, to encourage, and support my heart ! and my Jesus' rod and staff be with me, in the valley of the shadow of death. " I am bewildered in this hollow ground. " I have lost sight of my friend's dwelling :—I " know not whither I go." If doubts compass me in the valley of the shadow of death, while I walk in darkness, let me trust in the name of the Lord, who once said to me, " fear not, for I am with thee : be not dismayed, for I am thy God : I will strengthen thee ; yea, I will help thee ; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Hereon I repose all my present, all my future concerns.

" Now I have got to my lodgings." What a mercy it is that I and this family are alive ;—are well ! but how much greater, that I hope to meet with Jesus, and his saints, where there is neither sin nor sorrow, nor curse, nor crying, nor pain. " Here " the house-wife is busy in leavening her bread." Lord, let no souring leaven of hypocrisy or malice, but thy grace infect, and leaven my heart : let no error, but powerful gospel truth, leaven thy church. " The " evening sacrifice of family worship hath been offered up ; but most of the reapers slumbered and " slept." Better to perform it before supper ; for wearied bodies, and crammed stomachs, dispose to drowsiness.—Alas ! do we tire ourselves with the service, and cram our heart and belly with the enjoyments of an empty world, till we have neither spirit, strength, nor room for God ! —O to meet with my friends, where neither drowsy head nor sleepy heart, shall ever mar our songs of praise !

“Prayer and thanksgiving, not games at cards, prepare for bed here.” How surprising, that any where men should please that pitiful recreation ! how odd, to have rational souls chiefly filled with the pictures of small square pieces of painted paper ! how mad to neglect business, disorder minds, and families for their sake ! how wicked to appeal to God in the shuffling thereof ! how vile hereby to learn heathenish language of luck, chance, and the like ! have heathenish affections and practice dependance on these imaginary deities !

“Now I go up to my bed-chamber.” But thrice sweeter to go up to Jesus’ bed of love ; to ascend from a death-bed to his throne ; to mount up from a grave to meet the Lord in the air. “The servant who lighted me up, hath left the candle with me, and returned in darkness.” How often are ministers, and private persons, after assisting and lifting up the saints to their heavenly mansions, thrust down into utter darkness ; where there is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth ! “How the tallow of the candle boils, burns, and wastes !” Awful thought ! So shall wicked men decay as fat of lambs : so, for ever unwasting, shall they be tormented in hell. “Here the foolish fly plays with the flame till she burns herself.” Ah ! how many sport with lusts and temptations, sport with hell and damnation, till they be consumed !

“Let me look out at this window. How far shines yon lamp in this dark night !” So shines a good deed in a naughty world. But how shines Jesus’ deed of deeds, in loving us, and giving himself for us ! “What solemn noise I hear from yonder,

“city ! the guns roar, the fire-works play : it is to celebrate the birth, the coronation, or the approach of our prince.” Thrice happier day, when the artillery, the fire-works of God shall be played off, to celebrate the birth of eternal glory, the second coming, and public coronation of our Redeemer ! At his presence, creation shall be in agony ; the luminaries “ of heaven shall be shaken ; the heavens shall pass away with a great noise : the elements shall melt with fervent heat : the earth, and the works therein, shall be burnt up : a fire shall go before him ; it shall be very tempestuous round about him ;” awful sight ! being on being wrecked ! and world on world ! all nature trembles to the throne of God !—O to hear the joyful sound ! to see the solemn scene !—In wide eternity I dare be lost : for the eternal God is my own :—Thrice well found, when lost in love divine !

“ Now I worship God by myself.” Be serious and earnest, my soul ; it is perhaps thy last service of the kind : whom should I praise, but him who gave me a tongue to praise ! Let my highest view of advantage on earth be to praise ! and let all my heaven be the enjoyment of him : let me, by more than feeble faith, lay hold on the Supreme, and call his rich unfathomable mines my own ! let me pour my heart into his bosom, and leave myself on him as the Rock of my Salvation.

“ Now I am undressed ; should I not blush to appear thus in the street ?” Alas ! how many are like devils before God, and in secret, who are like angels in public ! “ Could not I go lighter, run faster, and “ work better without clothes ?” Cursed then be sin,

which introduced the need of them ; that teacheth most to deify them ; and not a few to wear them at the expense of the merchant. When, Lord, shall sin and shame bid me a final adieu ! and I be clothed upon with my robes, my house, which is from heaven ?

“ My candle is near wasted.” What though my candles of earthly comforts, of friends, and of enjoyments, be almost wasted ; it is near the day-break of eternal glory. “ Now extinguished, it goeth out with a stench.” Such is the death of the wicked : but may I, like a wax-taper, leave a sweet and edifying savour of Christ behind me.—May Jesus quickly extinguish sun and moon, these perennial lamps of creation, and make his own bright glory all in all.

“ I lie down on my bed.” Sure emblem of my speedy entrance into the cold, dark mansion of the grave.—Ever since I was conceived, I have been dying ! and the things of this world dying from me.—Ah ! how often have I loved, have married my heart to them, while they uttered their expiring groan ! but blessed be the Lord who dissolved these marriages, and at last fixed my soul to his ever-living self.—O to have an intimacy with death ; or rather with him that hath the keys of hell and death, that I may as cheerfully welcome the grave, as my weary bones do this easy bed !—“ But now, my conscience, let me examine thee, as in God’s sight, whither I have made my road to-day.” What sin have I committed or mortified ? What temptations have I resisted or conquered ? What communion with God have I enjoyed ? What graces have I exercised ?

What have I done to the glory of God, or to be profitable to men? From what motive, and to what end, did I perform that which is materially good?—Lord hasten the day, when such calling of myself to account shall be no longer necessary; but my work be one eternal round of praise. “My travel through the day makes my bed doubly sweet.” O how sweet is Jesus to the soul who finds himself wearied with pursuing after other lovers! how sweet is glory to those that enter it through much tribulation?

“What odd noise is this! I wish some demon “do not haunt the place.” No, no; it is but a mouse, a rat, an owl, a cat, or cur, that disturbs me: let me not use this puny creature’s din as a bell to invite me to the fear, the worship of those demons who so haunt my heart.—But is not this slavish fear an evidence of my guilt?—A token of my Atheism and unbelief?—Doth not God see me? doth not he watch over and keep me, night and day, lest any hurt me?—Let then his greatness, and nothing else, awe my heart. “Fear him, my soul, who, after he hath killed the body, can cast soul and body into hell fire; yea, I say unto thee, fear him.” O to dwell in the high places of the Lord, where their rest is never disturbed with fear in the night.

“Now I have fallen off my sleep.” Let me fix on my Saviour: let my meditation of him be sweet; let my soul follow hard after him in the secret watches of the night: and so turn them into the dawn of everlasting day. “Just now I dreamed “that I was great: was at a rare banquet.” What, my soul, are all outward enjoyments but the fancies

of a dream, that will flee away, as soon as conscience, death, or the last trumpet, awaken us? In our embrace, the earthly visions die : nothing is worth thy joys, nothing lovely or certain, as thy God?—How often have I been deluded concerning things of eternal moment :—O to be where there is no night ; no illusions ; where endless realities shall fill my whole heart and mind : where I shall know God himself, even as I am known, and see him as he is ! Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus.

THE
CHRISTIAN JOURNAL
OF A
WINTER-DAY.

“**W**HAT a frightful dream hath awakened me !” Often through the multitude of idleness, and of evil business, have my dreams been vain, or vile : But I wish this, of the day of judgment ; of my receiving a sentence of damnation ; and being dragged by devils to the bottomless pit,—be not a presage of future reality. Woes me ; how like this dream is the confused exercise of my soul ! Convictions of sin, such as they were, I have had ; but receiving and resting on Jesus Christ alone for salvation, as offered to me in the gospel, I know not. Oh to have him ! and be found in him !—to want all rather than him ! Lord, give me Christ, or else I die.

“ The cock crows.” Bestir thyself, my lazy soul : is this animal, who is in no danger of eternal ruin, already awakened ? and shall I sleep in more awful hazard, than if on the top of a mast, and in a raging ocean !—Was I made for no higher end than to sleep ? Yes, yes ; I was made for eternity : let the eternal Spirit thoroughly awaken and convince me of sin.

“ Is not this the first morning of a new year ! is it not my birth-day ?” Alas, how many years have I already lived ?—Ah ! not lived but lost them !

O dreadful, irrecoverable, though unheeded, loss of precious time ! Doth my entrance on this new year, presage my speedy exit into the eternal state ? let me then be serious to-day.—My conscience, I pose thee, as before God : Have I brought an old heart with me, from the old year, or not ? Did I outlive the finished period, in reigning enmity against God, or not ? Did ever my soul see a new birth-day or not ? Many years am I nearer to eternity, than at my birth : but whether have I approached to heaven, or to hell ?—Alas ! have not I much more work of preparation for a future state on hand ? and yet much less time for it ?—Was I born to eat, drink, and sin ? Was I in baptism sworn to lodge and cherish indwelling lusts, to forget God, to hate my Maker, and to live in constant rebellion against him ? Lord, how could thy vengeance suffer such an ungrateful, perjured wretch to live !—O now, now forgive my crimes, and give me a new heart and a new spirit, that I may begin the year with a new form of life : I tremble at the thought of living another year, month, or day, at the former rate.

“ Alas ! severe pains of gout, gravel, and cholic, hath seized me ; how can I bear this torment ! ” Be still, my soul, wherefore should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins ? I am indeed a living hospital ; am tormented : but, blessed be God, it is not in eternal flames : I have yet drops of water to cool the tip of my tongue, which is infinitely more than I deserve. The calls of his word being despised, he takes his rod to drive folly far from my heart : may it accomplish his end ; may it, like Aaron's, bud with blessings to my soul :—If the fro-

ward wretch must be whipt with scorpions, let me, though too late, be driven to Jesus the physician!—though I come too late to him, he cannot come too late to me. O the wretched case of my heart! it is pricked with deep convictions; and yet rageth with enmity against a Saviour. Lord, I dare not cry, Remove thy stroke from me: but strike, wound, drive, and draw me to thyself.—

“My pains are abated.” God forbid they should be removed in wrath! Affliction is light enough, and short enough if it purge away sin.—O let me never come forth from thy refining furnace, with more dross than I entered.—O sudden, sovereign healer of my body, heal my soul for thy name’s sake.—What doth it avail a sick soul, that she lodgeth in a sound carcase? or a condemned soul, that her prison-walls are repaired? what beside a time to be born, and a time to die, is appointed for man? how probable, then, may my next ailment end my days?—O were I dead to the law, and dead to my lust; how pleasant could I look for the death of my body, and at last the death of my death!

“The cock crows again.” When he who denied Jesus heard the second crowing, he went out and wept bitterly.—My soul, how often have I denied the Saviour! denied him room in my heart! denied him an honourable confession in my life! He that is not with him, is against him.—Rise, therefore, from thy lazy couch: go out and weep bitterly: how can I sleep! how lie at ease under the awful weight of so much sin unrepented of!—of so much unpardoned guilt! Arise, O sleeper, call on thy God; it may be he will think on me, that I perish not: Lord Jesus, art not

thou a Prince exalted to give repentance and remission of sins? Why then deny me these blessings? my sole hope is, that there are with thee degrees of mercy, beyond whatever men made us of.—Carest thou not that thy near kinsman perish?

“The morning star is risen.” Alas, have I once more seen him, without receiving Jesus, the bright and morning-star, into my heart? without having the day-star of grace risen in my soul? Lord, I cannot, I will not, want thee any longer: If thine enemy hunger, feed him with thy flesh; if he thirst, give him thy blood to drink; so shalt thou heap heart-melting coals of fire on his head. Hast thou not said, “that to us men, a child is born, to us a son is given; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace? I believe, Lord, help thou mine unbelief.”—Let heaven and earth bear witness, that I desire to accept of thee, as, in the gospel, made of God to me wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

“In this family I need expect no private worship: “the world seems their principal deity; and to her “they must pay their earthly devotion.” Let me double my diligence in secret worship. If others will starve their immortal souls: it is not fit that I should do it for the sake of company.—Doubtless the curse of the Lord is in this habitation of the wicked; let me speed away from it: better dwell with a raging plague, than with a wasting curse.—O what fools! what mad men are those, who thrust themselves or their seed into wicked worshipless families, for the sake of a few pence more gain?

"Scarce can I find a place for secret prayer; my bed-fellow is a profane mocker at every thing serious;—and no closet is to be had." Complain not my soul: the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof: let my heart truly incline to prayer; God will find me a place for it.—At Gethsemane, and elsewhere, the Son of God had but the open air, and cold ground for the closet; what a mercy that I, who deserve to be roaring in hell, may have as good! "I have now retired from my profane companion." But cannot, ah! cannot retire from that more profane companion, my wicked heart: she follows, attends, and goes before me to the mount of duty; wherever I lodge, she lodgeth.—O that death may separate between her and me! "Now I am at secret prayer." Be earnest, my soul; plead the promises which suit thy case; refuse to give over, till the Lord bless thee with a confirmation of thy marriage to his Son.

"It is but coarse and ill-readied provision which I am to have for breakfast." Earth is now my step-mother; why should I expect delicacies from her hand? it is rather astonishing, that I am so well served: perhaps some precious saints just now starve for want; why then do I, "who am less than the least of all saints, less than the least of God's mercies," complain?—Let me have Jesus, and I have enough.—Why should I be anxious to nourish a dunghill with delicacies; should I not rather admire the mercy, the power and wisdom of God, in preparing this for me? It is but modified dust: last year, perhaps, it lay in the dunghill; carried out, it grew up into that which I now eat and incorporate with my

body. What is this husk of my soul, but modified grass, dust and dung? Dust I am, and unto dust shall I return: Corruption, thou art my mother; ye worms, that wallow amidst unsufferable stench and vileness, are my sisters and brethren.—Lord, shall a system of dust and sin dare to be proud? shall he forbear astonishment, that the Son of God loved me, and gave himself for me? “Scarce have I got food “to satisfy my craving appetite.” Let me eke out the spare meal with a plentiful feast on the manna which cometh down from heaven: let me live, not by bread alone, but by faith on the words that proceed out of the mouth of God; live on meat which the world knows not of.

“I have got my staff in my hand; but my hard “couch hath wearied and unfitted me for my journey.” Murmur not, my soul, what a surprising mercy is a hard bed to one, who richly deserved to lie in hell! Had mine been soft, perhaps I had now wallowed in wantonness, or been drowned in sloth. O happy hardness, that roused me to an early prayer, in which I have found that which, I hope, eternity shall not make me forget! But, ah! how hath my lying on a bed of sin unfitted me for a heavenly journey! Lord, I am fit for nothing; good for nothing; neither to live nor die: neither to teach nor learn; neither to think nor speak; neither to do nor suffer. How I have improven my time, I am ashamed to speak; amazed to think. Go through all that I am, within or without, and all that I have done; what am I but vileness and abomination? I have run through all the means of knowledge, and yet see no truth in her glory! through all afflictions, and yet I

am not humble nor serious ; through all mercies, and yet I am not thankful : through all means of good, and yet I am evil, only evil, transcendantly evil, in the highest degree, to this day.—Lord, did ever such a deformed sinner exist ? did ever such a criminal apply to thee for mercy ? was ever such a work done to a poor wretch since the creation, as the saving of my soul must be ? But O how that salvation to the uttermost melts and supports my heart ! My soul, hast thou got the staff of a promise into thy hand, to support thee in this winter-journey ? O for a message from above, to bear my spirits up ! Dare not to go forth without this.—Methinks Jesus whispers to my heart. “ He shall call upon me, and I will answer him ; I will be with him in trouble ; I will deliver him, and honour him ; with long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.—And even unto old age I am he, and even to hoary hairs will I carry you ; I have made, and I will bear, and I will carry, and I will deliver you.”—Let this be my staff to-day : it seems to forebode a life of trouble ; but “ surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.” The everlasting mercy of God shall support me under, sweeten, and see all my troubles out :—What should I fear, who have Omnipotence my friend ? Pains, losses, and disappointments, may threaten me ; but either will not reach me, or will do me good : let me wait a while, I shall see them all in their proper, their lovely figure.—Be thou, JEHOVAH, my God ; and the whole world is mine : I shall be rich, till thou art poor : while thou art Sovereign I shall be safe : my sores, my sins, shall but give Jesus labour. O

how sweet, how safe to go through floods of tribulation, leaning on a Saviour?—The inconstancy of human nature might indeed terrify me : whatever I am for the present, I might tremble to think what I may become. But my comfort is, that my husband is the Lord, who changeth not, therefore shall I not be consumed.

“ The day is cold ; my clothes thin, and partly ragged ; my shoes draw water ; let me run the faster to keep myself in heat.” Ah ! how many winter-days of wrath have I travelled with nothing covering me before God, but a thin outward profession, a ragged, a wrath-deserving self-righteousness !—May I now put on the Lord Jesus as my righteousness and strength ; be clothed with the new man, which is created after his image ; be “ shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace ;” have my mind well instructed and established, and my affections captivated with divine truth ; and the more wants I have, let me run the faster to my heavenly Father’s house, where there is food and raiment, enough and to spare.

“ How thick the mist ! how gross the darkness ! “ were not the way plain, I could not trace it.”—Alas ! for the thicker darkness which now covers my soul ! such mist of ignorance, clouds of guilt and wrath surround me, that I have no glimmering of sensible comfort : and no wonder, that one full of sinful lust, be also full of darkness. Too long, ye filthy lusts, I have had communion with you ; but let me not dare to have it any longer : Now, in Jesus’ strength, I renounce your fellowship, and cleave to the God that made me ; to God who is light, and in

whom there is no darkness at all.—O new and living Way, if ever I found thee, thou wilt guide me when I have neither light to see thee, nor sense to keep thee: the way-faring man, though a fool, shall not err therein. O if, while I walk in darkness, I could trust in the Lord, and stay myself on him, whom, with trembling, I call my God.

“Yonder flies the blazing wild-fire; let me not go after it, lest I be decoyed into danger.” Follow not, my soul, those proud heretics, and renders of the church, who, with a blaze of high pretences to burning sanctity, charity, or zeal, delude men into error, guilt, and ruin. Beware of the dazzling temptations of Satan, when transformed into an angel of light.

“How is this rivulet swollen by the late rain! often have I seen it almost dry; now, amidst such darkness, I fear it is scarce passable.” How often do we encounter swelling trials, when, and where we least expected them! how hard to pass through floods of trouble, temptation, and death, when Jesus withdraws the light of his countenance! But why should I murmur at hardship? Jesus passed through, I hope for me, passed through swollen brooks of unbounded wrath; passed through them, while his Father hid his face from him, and was far from the words of his roaring. “Perhaps to-day this brook hath swallowed up some traveller, finished his wretched years, or begun more wretched of unceasing woe.” How many doth trouble this moment overwhelm with grief and pain! how many doth death hurry down into the ocean of eternity! let me not then be unconcerned. “I fear this stream

“ will take me off my feet.” Remember, my soul where afflictions lie heavy, sins lie light : ah, how often hath trouble lien heavier on my heart than my sin, the cause of it ! under sharp trials, how ready am I to cry out, Was ever sorrow like unto my sorrow ? was ever child of God afflicted, deserted, and tempted as I ?—Blush at thy stupidity and unreasonableness : Who made me a judge of saints’ affliction ? I know but mine own bitterness, while strangers do not intermeddle with my joy. What though my troubles were heaviest ; do I well to be angry, that God gives me strong physic to purge away my sin ! that he employs many strong servants, to work for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory ? Why do I provoke the Lord to jealousy ? am I stronger or wiser than he ? Did Jesus bear my mountainous load of envenomed woe ? and do I well to be angry, that God signally conforms me to the image of his dear Son, except in the wrathful nature of his bonds ? “ Woea me, I have
“ lost my feet ! I am gone ! help, help ! the water
“ chokes me ! Lord, into thy hand I commit my
“ spirit ?—Why am I thus ?—Hearing my rueful
“ cry, this friend hath run to my assistance ; at the
“ hazard of his life hath drawn me out : poured
“ forth the gravelly liquid, which had entered my
“ bowels ; borne me to his lodging ; warmed and
“ dried me before his fire, till I am quite revived and well.—May the blessing of one ready to
“ perish come upon him.” But, O what a melting lecture his kindness reads to my heart !—When the floods of sore trouble, of horrid temptations, of raging lusts, and of divine sentences of condemnation,

overwhelmed my soul, overturned my hopes, and made me as one giving up the ghost, Jesus came ; came without my call ; ran at the cry of my need ; not merely risked, but gave his infinitely precious life for me. When I was defiled, dead in trespasses and sins, he took me into his arms of power and grace, purged my heart of her reigning carnality and filth ; carried me to his chamber of presence ; quickened and warmed my soul with his love ; and clothed me with his righteousness, for change of raiment : Truly, O Lord, thou hast recovered me : thou hast turned back my captivity, while I was like one that dreamed : let my right hand forget her cunning, if ever my heart forget thy kindness.—But hast thou also spoken of me “ for a great while to come, saying, Because I live, ye shall live also ? ” Let me then never doubt of a safe outgate from danger and trouble.

“ Now I am again on my journey : there is a great deal of light :—what havoc hath the late deluging rain made ! fields are buried in sand, trees rooted up, household furniture carried off, cattle drowned, and channels of rivers changed.” At the resurrection morn, what havoc made by the floods of sin, and wrath, will appear more angels and men !—What havoc made thereby, appears in the morning of conviction !—What havoc do floods of temptation make in the church, and souls of men ! how they subject them to a carnal mind ! root up strong hopes, and tall professors ! carry off furniture of gifts and graces ! drown desires after God, and attempts toward reformation ! drown men in error and delusion ! and, when Satan and his agents cease tempting, they are but damming up their water,

that they may open their sluices with more violence and success; change the course of their lusts and sinful practices!—What havoc doth overwhelming death make in our world! flourishing persons, families, and nations are buried in dust and oblivion; mighty men are cast down; the apparently fixed are hurried into eternity; multitudes are driven from the substance of their house, and drowned in everlasting perdition; driven from their God, their all, into eternal flames, where mirth is turned into howling, songs into shrieks, and pleasure into pain. Oh! let me be rooted and grounded in Christ, dwell high in the munition of rocks: and then with cheerfulness may I sing, “The Lord sits King upon the floods; surely when they swell to the brim, they shall not overwhelm my soul, nor once come near to me.”

“The mist is returned: how it darkens our sky, “that it is neither day nor night!” How short while is the militant, and especially the New Testament Church, free from the darkening mist of error and delusion!—How sad, that under gospel days we should often live in more darkness, with respect to our views of God, our interest in him, and heart-exercise towards him, than did these under the ceremonial night!—Ah! how often can God alone know, whether it be day or night with my soul! or whether my eternity is to be a day of glory, or a night of wrath! “This mist, when I have entered among it, “appears much thinner than at a distance.” How often are my troubles much easier than my unbelieving mind presaged!

“Certainly the sun is risen, though I see him

(9.)

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"not." Sometimes we enjoy a real day of Jesus' power, a true day of a gracious state, while we have few sweet frames, and scarce any sensible views of his glory.—Lord, make me to live by faith on thy Son ; and give me sweet frames, not as the foundation of my faith, but as crutches to prop, and encourage her when staggering. "Now the sun breaketh from under the cloud." O Jesus, how should my soul be refreshed, wouldst thou break through clouds of temptation and trouble, and shine and smile upon her ! O Saviour, come down, shine forth, ere my soul die ! "This lowering aspect of the sun forebodes a storm." How often the frowns in my Redeemer's countenance, and awful reproofs in his mouth, presage storms of tribulation and anguish to my soul !

"This crowding of the household feathery people, this chirping of the tenants of the sky, their assembling about the farmer's mansion, and hedges, foretels an angry blast." May I foresee the evil and avoid it ; may I, may millions of my race, in the view of death, and trouble, mourn bitterly for our sin, and lodge ourselves near the deliverer, the covert from the storm, and from rain.

"Already the sun is wrapt in a thick cloud." How like this was my adored Redeemer's late visit to my soul ? scarce had I seen him, when, for the iniquity of my covetousness, he was wroth and hid himself, had withdrawn, and was gone.—Alas ! my pride, sloth, carnality, and idolizing of the frame in his presence, provoked him to leave me in great anger : what see I now, but clouds of guilt and woe ?

"But why such travelling of people on this cold

“ new-year’s-day ? they go to visit and feast with
 “ their friends, or to hire themselves, or take a
 “ new lease of their house.” Alas ! that multi-
 tudes better remember this day, or some one near it,
 to keep it unholy in idleness, carnal feasting, and
 drunkenness, than they do the Sabbath to keep it
 holy !—That the vain custom of parents or neigh-
 bours, weighs more with many, than the solemn,
 the express law of God !—That after near sixteen
 hundred years profession of Christianity in the na-
 tion, multitudes should begin their year with a relic
 of heathenish idolatry :—Friends, would it not much
 more become your Christian profession, would it
 not yield you more satisfaction in death and judg-
 ment, to begin your years, your months, your days,
 with God ; in mutual prayers, and admonishing of
 one another ;—In visiting your Maker with fervent
 supplication, and joyful praise ;—in feasting with
 him upon the flesh and blood, the person and right-
 eousness of his Son :—in drinking abundantly out of
 his wells of salvation :—and, by examining your-
 selves, taking hold of the new covenant, and de-
 voting yourselves to God’s service, securing your
 interest in the house eternal in the heavens !

“ How, amidst this cold, these labourers sing and
 “ whistle at their plough !” Learn, my soul, to
 serve Christ with cheerfulness and joy, even in the
 winter of temptation and distress ; rejoice always in
 God, through my Lord Jesus Christ, by whom I
 have received the atonement : and count it all joy
 when I fall into divers temptation. “ How fool-
 “ ish and unfaithful are these ditchers ! diligence is
 “ necessary to keep their bodies in temper ; yet

“scarcely hath their master turned his back, when
“they neglect their business, and hide their hands
“in their bosom.” Alas! how few servants believe that God always seeth them? how few pay as much regard to their Maker’s eye as to their master’s! How little do we, professed Christians, set the Lord before us! how often by sloth, or improper work, do we put ourselves out of every degree of proper frame for duty! “How deep among cold
“water these work! They cleanse the mill lead
“from the gravel run into it by the late inundation:—necessity hath no law, meal must be
“grinded.” Think, my soul, how Jesus came into deep waters, how he sunk in deep mire, when there was no standing, while he opened the channel of his Father’s favour to men, which the deluge of sin had stopped!—And never count any thing disagreeable that serves to make the river of life run into my heart, or to remove the carnality of my practice: to be carnally minded is death. “Yonder people
“look and rake into the stream; they search for
“something valuable, carried off by the late swelling
“rains.” Kind Redeemer, how graciously hast thou sought out my soul, from the pit of corruption!—Let me spare no pains to recover evidences of grace, carried down before the swelling floods of temptation and lust.

“So intense is the cold, that my walking can
“scarce keep me in heat, far less could I here employ myself in watch-making, embroidery, or any
“fine work.” And when we leave our first love to Jesus, fall under the power of indifferency, the curious exercises of spiritual watchfulness, of showing

proper patterns of good works, of adding grace to grace, and of adorning our conversation with eminent holiness and humility, cannot be performed.

“How quick it freezeth! how hard is the earth
“in a short time! how little influence hath the low,
“the distant, and short-lived sun!” Is not this frozen earth a proof of God’s sovereignty, who alone can open and seal up the face of nature at his pleasure? Is it not an emblem of my frozen heart, which he alone can thaw?—But, alas! so distant is the Sun of Righteousness, so low his elevation in my soul, so short his visits, that I have scarce seen his face, or felt his love, when my darkness and cold are returned!—O for that long summer-day of endless glory, when his noon-tide brightness shall dazzle my eyes, and the genial warmth of his love shall melt my soul to the centre, and inflame all her powers with love to him!

“Where is now the beauty of summer? No
“grass, no corn now shoots: no flowers blossom;
“almost every tree is naked and bare.” When it is winter with the church, how great is her barrenness! how few her converts: how scanty the good works of her members!—When Jesus withdraws from my soul, how my graces languish and fade! every thing appears withered to, and in, my heart.—Ordinances and promises, once like the garden of God, are as a dry desert: the Tree of Life seems a root out of dry ground; and his heavenly paradise an idle tale, an empty dream. “But amidst these
“winter horrors, firs, hollies, cedars, and some other
“vegetables, retain their verdure.” O how fat and flourishing, even while others fade, are those

who dwell in the courts of God, and live in habitual fellowship with him !

“ Where are now the noisome vermin, which in
“ the summer defiled our pools, scoured the air,
“ crawled on the ground, or clung to the herb ?”
And doth not a winter of adversity and persecution,
check the naughty professors ? Doth not a winter of
strong affliction tend to slay our abominable lusts ?
“ Where are now the swallows, and many others of
“ the pinioned tribes ! some of them sleep in chinks
“ of walls, or holes of earth ; others have fled to
“ warmer climates.” O thrice dreadful winter of
eternal woe ! no sleep, no flight can preserve the sin-
ner from thy baneful influence ! no distant region
shall admit him ! no hill, no mountain, shall shel-
ter him from almighty wrath !—Let not me, with
most, sleep away the winter of adversity, but flee far
hence to the warm regions of the new covenant, and
of near fellowship with my God ; and abide there,
till every sad calamity be wholly overpast.

“ What means this leaping of the flocks and
“ herds ? It foretells the storm.” Lord, are these
pictures of men, who leap, who dance, and sing,
when on the very brink of endless ruin ? or are they
reprovers of our madness, who think not of, nor pre-
pare for, death or judgment ? “ How incessantly
“ yonder puny wren hops from place to place !”
Ah ! humbling emblem of my heart, which cannot
fix a moment on that which is good ! Scarce am I
begun to meditate on the most concerning truth,
when she, with the fools eyes, is in the ends of the
earth. “ Now red-breast, forsaking his fellows of
“ the wood, hops on the floor ; views the smiling

“family askance ; pecks and starts, and wonders
“where he is.” So in the winter of adversity, let me
forsake my father’s house, and my own people, come
boldly to the courts, the habitation of my God ; let
me with wonder and reverence, view my smiling
Saviour : let me by faith enter into the house eternal
in the heavens, and view the happy family above.
“Here a poor sparrow, pursued by the hungry hawk,
“flies into my bosom for shelter : shall I slay, or
“deliver up my prisoner ? No ; humanity forbids.”
To thee, O Jesus, I flee to hide me ; surely thou wilt
neither kill me thyself, nor deliver me into the hands
of the cruel enemy.

“Here the battle of * * * * was fought : here the
“trenches were digged, and the artillery planted :
“here lay the ambuscade : here chiefly fell the
“slain.” My soul, art thou as distinctly versed in
the circumstances of Jesus’ conflict on the cross, and
in thy heart ? how have my lusts and graces strug-
gled ? How did Satan lead on his troops, and cause
his ambushment of unexpected snares to come behind
me ? how did he and his agents entrench themselves
within me ? How did my grace entrench herself un-
der the shadow of the Rock of Ages ? what artil-
lery of promises on the one side, and of temptations
on the other, were pointed and discharged ? what
wounds, what death, what slaughter was made on
either ! “Here the slain were buried in heaps.”
You Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander, Cæsar, Oguz,
Mahmud, Jengiz, Timurbeg, Lewis the Great, with
your fellow scourges of nations, Did you conquer ?
Rather your lust of pride, your worse than savage
thirst for blood, conquered you : you brutal mur-

derers, how dreadful your account to the Creator, the Preserver of men ! How shall a part of our wars on earth amount to any thing else than murder and robbery before God ! How little regard is in them paid to that law of God, " Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them ! " When at last the earth shall cast forth her dead, how awful the sight ! what horror shall seize the bloody murderers, while they, at Jesus' bar, behold the objects of their guilt ! But, my soul, are not most of our assemblies upon earth graves of lust, in which we bury, and are buried, one of another ? " Here one lay some hours under the dead board, dies, and yet escaped." How strangely God preserveth us in life ! how near destruction an oppressive body of death sometimes brings our new man ; who yet, by God's all-sufficient help, safely escapes at last ! " Here lieth an unburied carcase : how much " more noisome and abominable than that of any " beast ! " How odious are those professed Christians, who, in the winter of distress, continue under the reign and rage of lust ; and trespass more and more against the Lord ! they are worse than dead, while they live.

" Now I come to the suburbs of this city ; how " different these two lodgings ! the one is extremely " mean, the other is no less handsome." Much greater is the difference between a gracious and a graceless heart : much greater the difference between the saints' present and their future lodging : much greater difference between the eternal mansions of the blessed, and the dungeon of the damned.

" Here lives my friend : let me ask how he doth.

“—Ah! what a hospital is his house! all the family, except the mother, are sick at once.” What a mercy is it, that whole families seldom sicken together, but God gives some health to take care of the rest! “Here one seems dying in a wild rave: how he sings, and babbles nonsense!” Lord, what need have we to secure our interest in eternal salvation while in health! Not one serious thought could this poor creature think, suppose it could purchase him heaven: and who knows but I may depart in the same unreasonable manner? O our need to avoid idle, frothy, and wicked language, while we have the use of reason, lest God suffer us to die like a troubled sea, casting forth such mire and dirt. “Here one dies in the depth of ignorance, and height of self-conceit: he fancieth that his heart is far from bad; that he hath loved Christ, and kept all his commandments from his youth up.” Lord, convince him of his mistakes, otherwise the flames of hell will soon do it. “Here lies a third, who enjoys his reason, but inclines to jest as a fool, or talk as in a fair.” Lord, how hard is it to reform men from evils which they have long practised? most men will die as they lived:—I wish the strokes of thy wrath do not quickly make him serious. “Here is a fourth that seems dying in Christ, but is overwhelmed with doubts: he appears very loathsome in his own eyes; Jesus’ blood seems the only bottom of his staggering hope of salvation.” Lord, give power to the faint; and to him who hath no might increase strength; break not the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. “Here lieth one who reckons himself the very chief of sinners; and yet boldly

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“ claims Jesus as his own ; and firmly expects salvation, by virtue of the covenant of grace made with him.” May my life, and my last end be like his. “ How noisome is the smell of this chamber, where sickness and death are so rampant !” And how infinitely noisome is the smell of my heart, where sinful sickness and death so abound !

“ What mean this company, who now visit this distressed family ? they belch forth so much carnal chat, and then depart.” Are these visitants beasts, that they cannot utter one word about Christ, or eternity, to their dying friends ? cannot join to request their salvation before they leave them ? “ Here comes the minister.” What carnal jargon, and common news, hath he talked over ! how he flatters the sick, that their good works will carry them safe to heaven, and speaks as if “ Wide were the gate, and broad the way that leadeth unto life !”—Alas, hath he no compassion, no conscience, that he so deludeth immortal souls, on the very brink of eternity ?—that he useth no pains, to convince them of their true state and condition ; or to lead them to redemption through the blood of Jesus, according to the riches of his grace ?

“ Here is the church ; yonder is a meeting-house : no less than three or four kinds of professed Presbyterians are in this city.” Sadly hath the anger of the Lord divided his people here. No doubt each party extol themselves as purest, and are too ready to wipe their mouth and say, We have done no wickedness ; readier to spy the mote in their neighbour’s eye, than the beam in their own. God indeed chargeth his people to withdraw from them that

walk disorderly ; but none of our divisions seem to be managed with due fear and trembling : we rather strive to say than to do more than others : we are too much disposed to love others as they bear our image, and are of our party, rather than as they bear the image of Christ in holiness of life ; as if the ties of faction were stronger than those of religion, an itch to be the reverse of those we do not join with, often leads us into practical blunders.—Amidst all our contests, we sadly harmonize, in losing spiritual liveliness, in neglect of an holy and humble conversation ; and of wrestling with God, till the Spirit be poured out from on high. Lord, save the fearers of thy name from ignorance, pride, prejudice, and want of brotherly love ; let none of them oppose thy Spirit and grace to thy righteousness and truth : what in the controversies of these times tends to thy honour, or their immortal interests, teach thou them ; dispose them to pray and confer together upon spiritual things, in which they are agreed, that they may come to see eye to eye, in the truths in which they differ ; let none of them hazard their souls to hear heathenish poison, or Arminian stuff, instead of the gospel of Christ ; nor associate with such as privately teach it : let none of them dare to communicate with such persons as they should be ashamed to sit with at a public inn : let none of them dare to acknowledge those for ministers, who have no proper evidence of concern for souls, and no just token of a mission from Christ ; for these, however they may tickle their fancy, and move their passions, shall not profit this people at all : let none of them swear sinful oaths, nor lawful bonds which they do not understand ;

and which they make no conscience to keep, except as a badge and tie to a particular party : let none of them separate from corrupt ministers, without studying to separate from corrupt lusts and practices : let none of them condemn brethren ; and far less, in Jesus' name, deliver precious saints or ministers to Satan, because their head is not of the very same size with theirs.—Alas ! how often are the least intelligent the hottest in a controversy : these who implicitly take up notions, the most rigid in requiring others to receive their sentiments ! how often are the most noisy disputants but very ordinary practisers ! and how often, too, are persons very blameless in their life, extremely careless about the truths relative to the order of Jesus' church ! Woes me, will we rob God upon the one hand or the other, and so bring a curse upon our nation ? But, O thrice happy church triumphant, when the redeemed of the Lord, out of every party justly called Christians, shall for ever sweetly concur in the celestial worship, and prefer one another in love ! O for a double portion of their insight into divine truth ; of their self-denial, love to the Lamb, and to one another !

“ A church judicatory sits here to-day ; let me “ go in, and observe what they do.” Is not this court constituted in Jesus' name, an emblem and prelude of his sitting on his great white throne to judge the world ? Watch always, my soul, and act as one that must give an account : and let no injuries sink my spirit ; he shall redress my wrongs. Methinks, persons thus sitting in his name, should act and speak as they have reason to think he would do, if in their place. Great fear is due to him in

meeting of his saints. "Why then this frequent
"smiling? this angry contention about trifles? this
"repetition of that which is better said by another?
"this retailing and pushing of arguments merely
"illusive? this impatience of refutation? this mis-
"representing and reproaching the sentiments of
"such as differ from them? this management of
"ecclesiastical affairs, by carnal policy and from
"selfish motives and ends? why, at the expense of
"profaning their Master's name, have these church
"rulers an itch to show the audience that they can
"speak; and have forgotten that Jesus said, My
"kingdom is not of this world?"—Lord, the more
attentively I view any person or any thing, but thy-
self, the more imperfection appears in them. But
never could I descry blemishes, but new glories, new
excellencies, in thee.

"Here a parent outrageously corrects, should I
"say murders, his child." He can neither regard
correction as a divine ordinance; nor look up for a
blessing on it; but only vents his own rage. O how
furious are our sinful passions that can at once tram-
ple on God's law, and bear down our natural affec-
tion and credit! But, blessed for ever be my divine
Parent, that he corrects me in boundless wisdom and
love: he hath sworn, "I will not be wroth with
thee, nor rebuke thee."

"How rudely yonder fair woman abuseth her
"husband, while he returns her the most endearing
"language!" Beautiful bodies at best are but fair
prisons: and ah! how often temples for Satan, and
the most unruly lusts? Why then, O Jesus, should
any beauty but thine be prized? why then should fair

temples of devils have more suiters than infinite fairness and excellency ? But, is not this outrageous woman an emblem of myself ? Ah ! my brawling with my divine husband ! my rude abuse of him, while he entertained me with gracious words, and sweet smiles, sufficient to melt a rock, and win the heart of a devil ? Times without number “ have I sinned, and perverted that which is right ; ” but the due reward of my deeds have never been rendered unto me : the Lord hath requited me with blessing for cursing, as at this day.

“ Yonder mother’s lean cheeks and meagre looks declare her half-starved ; yet how fat and fresh is her suckling child ; how kindly she applies him to her breast, and nourisheth him with the juice of her body ! ” O what must be the kindness of God, which infinitely exceeds this tender mother’s ! Wondrous truth ! he loved me, and gave himself for me : and though a woman should forget her sucking child, so as not to have compassion on the fruit of her womb ; yet he will not forget me : he hath graven me on his heart and hands ; I am continually before him.

“ Yonder children, I suppose, go about seeking their new-year’s gift.” This memorial of ancient superstition I cannot approve : but with pleasure should I behold all the children of Christ uniting in truth, in love, in Christian fellowship, of breaking of bread, and of prayer ; with pleasure shall I see them, at last enter the palace of the King with gladness and rejoicing.

“ Here is a famed Surgeon’s shop ; no doubt his shelves are planted with pots, -vials, and boxes,

“ full of useful medicine.” But where is Jesus my famed, my unmatched, physician, who has power over all plagues, heals all diseases, freely and tenderly binds up all my painful wounds ? what numbers of truths and promises are beautifully arranged in his word, and full of efficacious, of divine medicines for the healing of the nations ? “ Here stands the physician himself, ready to converse with, or administer cure to such as apply.” Lord, did ever I, or any other, find thee unready, when we came with our sad, our shameful maladies ? when we called, didst thou not say, Here am I ? Nay, how often hast thou called me in, and said to my soul, Wilt thou not be made whole ? “ No doubt this skilful doctor can qualify, and mingle poison itself, to render it useful ; and can make painful probing and cutting, a means of cure.” And cannot Jesus make temptations and troubles, and even corruptions, means of proving, humbling and doing me good ? let me trust my all-diseased soul wholly to his skill. “ Yonder is the stamp-office.” Lord, let me have the stamp of thy blood, thy Spirit, on my heart and life ; so shall my person and work be accepted in thee, O beloved.

“ To-day is a market in this place ; many things are exposed to sale, but scarcity of money forbids me to price any of them.” Blessed be the Lord, that though money answereth all things here, yet it can answer nothing at the market of free grace : To be poor, wretched, miserable, blind, naked, lost, a sinner, ungodly, unjust, rebellious, a crimson-coloured transgressor, a wearier of God with iniquity, a blasphemer, a persecutor, an injurious person, is

all the wealth, the qualification which insures my welcome to Jesus as a Saviour, with whom it is more blessed to give than to receive.—Let me at a distance behold this various merchandise, and attempt to discern spiritual things through it: so may I make the best bargain in the market; and be filled, be laden with good things, while the rich are sent empty away.

“Here is plenty of cloth well dyed; and I hope well made; here is fine linen, strong, and thoroughly whitened.” Sad memorial of our sin! had not Adam made us naked to our shame, we should have no need of this to cover us. “What labour it requires to prepare this cloth for our use!” How much more abundant, how far other labour it required, to prepare a robe of righteousness and grace for our soul! the service, the curse, the shame, the sweat, the pains, the groans, the death of God!—But how many warnings of mortality doth this cloth comprehend? doth not the frailty of every thread, the quick motion of the shuttle wherewith it was wrought, the cutting out of the web, the wearing, the rending, or the moth-eating of it, represent the frailty and shortness of life; the certain, the sudden, and easy approach of our dissolution? Shall the preparers of our cloth, the makers of our apparel, forget daily to ask their conscience, Have I busied myself so long in preparing raiment for the bodies of others? What have I done to secure everlasting attire to my soul? Amidst memorials of death, shall they believe all men mortal, but themselves? Were this cloth wholly mine, how quickly would it be worn, rotten, or moth-eaten! Such is my work of

righteousness : but Jesus' salvation is for ever, and his righteousness shall not be abolished. Thrice happy I, who must for ever wear the unwasting, the fine linen, the purple, and scarlet robes of his imputed atonement !

“ What plenty of rings, ribbons, laces, and other ornaments, are here !” To what purpose is our mortal dunghill decked with so much fine drapery ? what the worse am I, of wanting money to purchase trifles, which can neither feed, shelter, nor warm me ? — Covet earnestly, my soul, the best things : let Jesus, who is better than rubies, and his grace, be my jewels, my ornaments, my ALL : let me have the ornament of a meek and quiet mind, which in the sight of God is of great price ; and let my faith shine brighter than gold that perisheth.

“ Here is a number of vessels, some to honour and some to dishonour.” Striking memorial of God's sovereign purpose, in which he hath predestinated some angels and men to endless honour, and “ some to everlasting shame and contempt ! Let me be a vessel sanctified, and made meet for the Maker's use ;” so shall I appear to have been a vessel of mercy, afore prepared unto glory. “ Were all these vessels filled from the ocean, its waters would not in the least seem abated.” Nor will the ocean of divine goodness and love be in the least diminished by the endless filling of angels and men.

“ Here is abundance of wright-work ; with much hewing, cutting, and polishing, it hath been formed from the rough wood.” But with far more hewing, and cutting of conviction and trouble, and with

far more polishing influence of heaven, hath my soul been formed for the service of God.

“What sieves and riddles lie here!” How like the former are God’s judgments, by which he sifts the nations, and often separates the good from the bad! How like the latter is my memory, that loseth what is substantial, and retains the chaff of vileness and vanity! Lord, make me solid grain, that trouble and death may separate me from my sin, but never from thee. “Were these utensils filled from the deepest ocean, they would no sooner be out, than the whole water, except what moistened them, would be gone.” Lord, I am such a rent vessel, that I lose more of truth and grace than I hold: but let me daily dip myself into the ocean of thy bleeding love, that I may retain as much as moistens all my powers: and O hasten the happy period, when I shall for ever sink into it, and be for ever filled with all the fulness of God

“Here is the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire; much of his work, as hinges, locks, keys, &c. shrewdly hints, that we are thieves and robbers.” Alas! are we inclined to rob men; and much more to rob our Maker, our Saviour, of his due honour and regard?—O Jesus, bind my heart and hands to thee, with stronger than bands of iron and brass; with cords of love, and bands of a man; let not me, like the slothful, be as the door that turneth upon hinges, without any progressive motion; but let thy word be quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword to pierce my soul, as an hammer to break the iron and steel of my

heart: fashion me according to thy will, on the gospel-anvil: let him who hath the keys of hell and death, save me from the wrath to come; him that hath the key of David open my heart, and give me the key of faith to open every promise, and so open every prison into which I may be shut up. "Here" is the founder, with his moulded ware." O bleeding Jesus, melt and purge me in the furnace of thy love; cast me in the mould of thy word; make me useful or ornamental in the house of my God.—Have I forgot my Saviour's melted heart? O how warmed with unoriginated, with unmeasured, and unceasing love! how uncompassed! how beset! how laden with the fuel of our ennumbered iniquities, which the Lord laid on him! how seized by the fiery law, the incensed justice of an angry God! how overwhelmed with grief! how broken with reproach, the contradiction of sinners against himself! how shocked, how pained with the withdrawal of his Father's gladdening presence; how tormented amidst the kindled vengeance, the awakened fury of Almighty God! how amazed and very heavy his vigorous soul! how exceeding sorrowful even unto death! how troubled, till he knew not what to say!—Why, my FAIR ONE; why, my GREAT ALL, was thy heart melted as the wax amidst thy bowels of compassion! why thy strength dried like a pot-herb! Was it to vent thy unmatched love; thy sovereign grace, to hateful, hopeless; to rebellious, guilty; to wretched, worthless me! Was it to obey, to magnify the broken law; to fulfil all righteousness for an eternal robe to naked me! to satisfy avenging justice for offending me!—Was it to en-

throne **JEHOVAH**, as a God of grace, of gifts, of peace, of comfort, and of salvation to me ! Was it to finish transgression ; make an end of sin ; subdue Satan ; conquer the world ; plague death ; swallow up hell for me !—Was it to confirm the new covenant, to furnish all her promises with strong consolation to sinful men, and to sinful me !—Was it to rectify my brutal, my diseased, my devilish heart !—Was it to prepare a lofty throne, a lodging in his inmost love ! a ceaseless banquet on mercy ! an endless hymn of grace for me !—O stupendous ! was the heart, the soul of my God made a troubled sea ; a tormenting hell of woe for me ! O how my eyes are dazzled with the glory ; how my heart is overwhelmed, and my thoughts swallowed up with the greatness of his love ! how pleasantly I look through the promise, thrust my hands into his side, and see, and feel, his melted heart ; his bleeding love ; and am no more faithless, but believing ! how my inward, my infernal rock, melts at the sight ; at the touch !—If I, if any power in my soul love not this Lord Jesus Christ ; let it be anathema, maranatha ; accursed at his coming.—O to suck the warm breath which springs from this melted heart ! —O to be filled with—to be for ever plunged in a Redeemer's bleeding love ! “ No doubt, much of this beautiful work “ is framed from old utensils, melted, and polished “ anew.” What wonderful change to the better do regeneration, sanctified troubles, and especially death and the resurrection, make upon the ransomed ! who would not choose to be melted down by ten thousand deaths,—to be made like God by seeing him as he is : and to have this vile body made

like unto Christ's glorious body ! " These agents
" in the fire hath not laboured for very vanity :"
As, alas ! many professed Christians do, who daily
live in the fire of contention with their neighbours,
and with their God.

" Yonder is a large assortment of earthen ware."

I also am formed out of the clay : but, blessed be
the Lord, that we have the gospel treasure in earthen
vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of
God, and that in my flesh I may see God. " What
" confections and sweet-meats are at yonder door !
" How often do children desire those to their hurt !"
How often do Satan's seed ruin themselves, by their
mad running on the fancied sweets of carnal profits,
pleasures, or honours ! How often would the chil-
dren of God hurt themselves by pleasant frames,
and sensible manifestations of his love, should he
always grant their desire !—But after bestowing
them in their spiritual infancy, he often wisely with-
draws these delicacies, and teacheth his people, when
grown up, to live by faith on his Son. " Here is
" plenty of shoes, for the warmth, ease, and safety
" of our feet." O to have the feet of my affections
and conversation well shod, well seasoned, and sup-
ported with gospel-principles, and warmed with the
faith of God's love to me, and the exercise of my
love to him ! so should I walk at liberty ; walk and
not be weary ; run and not stumble in the path of
holiness ! " How large is the 'corn market to-
' day ! it is good that there should be the greatest
" quantity of that which is most necessary." O
when shall I eat of the old corn of Canaan above,
and feed on the everlasting God as my all in all !

“Yonder is a variety of toys.” Alas! how many spend their whole life, in making and adoring the toys of self-righteousness, and of outward enjoyments! “How publicly these merchants exhibit their wares, that passengers may be invited by the view! how they call and encourage to a bargain such as come near.” How sweetly doth Jesus exhibit his blessings in the gospel! how kindly he invites us to come, and buy without money, and without price! how powerfully did his voice allure me to receive them into my heart! “Nobody here offers himself to sale.” But Jesus himself is the principal, the substance of all my merchandise with heaven: he is all, and in all.

“But are there not here more spectators than buyers? and how many appreciate goods, who do not seem truly inclined to purchase them?”—Alas! how many stand all day idle at the market of God’s free grace? and with mere gazing on what is offered, and pricing what they have no heart to buy, trouble the glorious merchant! How long was this the practice of my soul! “But why doth the buyer almost constantly offer less than is demanded; and make a bustle of words to cheapen the price?” Vile cheapening, thou child of covetousness; thou parent of fraud and falsehood; how shocking to see thee more abound with professed Christians, than with many infidels! But how much more shocking to see men prig up the price of that which Jesus Christ offers him freely; and because he will not heighten it, they will have none of him!—Times without number, hath my soul dealt in this cursed work.

“ Here one changes a bank-note.” I have none such to change ; but, blessed be the Lord, I have far better.—All the promises, the bank-bills of heaven, are mine ; payable to me according to need : let my constant business be, by prayer or faith to present and protest them at the throne of grace ; what wealth of communion with, and conformity to God, may I thus enjoy on earth ! what fulness of glory hereafter in heaven !

“ How many here buy goods on trust !—I wish “ they truly intend to pay according to promise : “ that they do not forget, or shift the day of account ; and that their present seeming regard for “ the creditor, turn not into hatred, and into shunning to trade with him when they have ready “ money.” Alas ! to how many professed Christians is this divinelaw, “ Owe no man any thing, but to love one another,” as salt which hath lost its savour ; good for nothing, but to be cast out to the dunghill, and trodden under foot of men ! And is it not more heinous theft, deliberately to live beyond our ability, or to buy, on trust, goods which we have no probable view of paying ; than to rob our neighbour’s fold, when we are pinched with hunger !—Woes me ! how lying under unpardoned guilt, influenced me to hate God my creditor : shift dealing with him ; forget and abhor the day of account ! And doth not delay render me the more averse to pay my vows ? “ Often these merchants gives packing to the bargain, if needful.” And in receiving Jesus, and his fulness, I obtain also every necessary outward enjoyment, as coming in a new covenant channel. “ Here the buyer boasts of that which,

“just before, while buying it, he decried as naught, ‘naught.’ Deceitful man! art thou not abhorred of God?—Wicked dissembler! how canst thou escape the damnation of hell?—Alas! before I received Jesus Christ the Lord, ignorantly, and in unbelief, I called him naught, naught: but since I knew him, I did, and shall for ever boast of his excellency: worthy is he to be praised; let us exalt his name together. Contemned for ever be that heart that durst, these men who dare, condemn my Christ, my God, my ALL.

“How necessary are distinct accounts, for such ‘as deal deep in merchandise.’ Carefully remember, O my soul, what thou owest to thy Lord; and what passeth between thee and him; for, if once thy accounts run into disorder, thou art in a fair way to fearful ruin. “But what shall the merchants here do, whose day’s gain will not bear ‘their expence?’ What can they do better, than balance a bad market, by receiving into their heart the all-enriching Mediator; and wait for another more gainful opportunity?—When ordinances do not answer my wishes, let me go a little further, to Jesus himself; and carefully attend every after-mean of grace; never can I wait so much for him, as he hath waited to be gracious to me.

“Yonder the hue and cry are raised against a ‘thief, caught in the very act: perhaps, to cover ‘his guilt, himself, as loudly as any, cries, Hold the ‘thief.’ How often do untender professors loudly bawl against the sins of others, while themselves practise the like, or worse!—Wonder, my soul, that, amidst pinching poverty, God hath restrained my

hands from theft ; let him ever keep me from this, which is no where in scripture represented as the spot of his children.—Admire, that times without number he hath caught me in the very act of robbing him of his honour and service ; caused me with shame to lay down my stolen goods ; and yet never made me a public example of wrath : nay, when through fear and confusion I have run to hide myself, he hath pursued, overtaken, and said to my soul, “ I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions :—Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee.”

“ Now the unhappy felon is caught, and carried “ to prison.” So shall the Lord apprehend his impenitent foes, and shut them up in the infernal lake. But, O marvellous, he hath caught me in my sin, and shut me up in his bosom of redeeming love ! “ Is this the manner of men, O Lord !”—Let me follow “ the wretch into his confinement ; that I may receive a little instruction.” Now think, O my soul, how thou hast engaged to serve thy God unto bonds, imprisonment, and death : how wouldst thou relish this service ! Lord, a prison with thy presence would do well enough ; it might be a cabinet to lock me up from temptation, wandering, and danger ; while my soul should walk at liberty with God and his angels : except the world be better than when the “ lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life,” were the whole furniture thereof, it is small loss to be separated from her society.—To suffer contempt for Jesus, would be high honour : did I in patience possess my God and my soul, no want could hurt me ; nor could my imprisonment be

long when death would set me at liberty ; nor durst my persecutors slay me, except it were given them from above : nor would my heavenly Father sign my death-warrant, till he desired me where he is, to behold his glory. And, how many deaths could I cheerfully undergo to get thither ! My soul languisheth for the habitations of the Most High.

“ But what confinement, what filthiness, what ill savour ; what cold, what darkness, and uneasiness ; what short allowance, what want of liberty, and deprivation of beloved society ; what infamy, and uncertainty as to the issue, attend our earthly imprisonments ! ” Is not this an emblem of our present world ? we are conceived in the prison of the womb ; bring forth the prison of a frail body upon our back ; and come into a dungeon of darkness, ignorance, spiritual coldness, filthiness slavery, trouble, infamy, distance from God, and from the blessed spirits of just men made perfect.—Lord, though I desire not to fret at my imprisonment in life, lest with the Thracians I should break my teeth gnawing my chains ; yet, allow me, with the captive exile, to hasten to be loosed. O dispatch thy messenger, death, with my writ of liberty ; Jesus bails my appearance before the high court of the last judgment.—Is not this prison a picture of our sinful state ? In what cold, in what pollution, in what darkness, in what poverty, in what hunger, in what nakedness, in what infamy, in what restraint, in what slavery and solitariness, without Christ, without God, and without hope in the world, do we lie there ? Alas ! how many are there, who know not, who feel not their wretchedness ! this is a bedlam indeed, where

men pity not themselves.—May he that, by the blood of the covenant, brought me out of the pit, in which there is no water, pity them ; and bring their soul out of prison, that they may glorify his name.—Is not this prison a figure of the condition of a saint, when God hides, when Satan tempts, troubles surround, and lusts prevail ? How often have I lain here, as one free among the dead ; and been shut up, that there was no evasion for me !—Forget not, my soul, the unspeakably wretched prison of the damned. Flee, flee, ye prisoners of hope, flee from the wrath to come ; flee to Jesus' atonement, for the remission of your sins : If you relish not an earthly prison, how can you abide with devouring fire ; how dwell with everlasting burnings ?

“ In yonder chamber the criminals are sisted before the judge ; are tried, condemned, or absolved, “ as the proof turns out.” Solemn presage of Jesus' sitting on his cloudy throne ; gathering the nations to his bar ; trying and acquitting the righteous ; but condemning the wicked. “ How shocking are our “ executions on earth !” But ten-thousand-fold more dreadful is Jesus driving millions of devils and men from his judgment-seat, into everlasting punishment. Happy you who can sing hallelujah, because the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.

“ Here rageth and staggers the drunken man.” Ah ! how wicked ! he profanes the creatures of his Maker ; murders his body ; damns his soul ; beggars his family ; shames his nature ; extinguisheth his reason ; cuts the throat of his conscience ; and shipwrecks his chastity !—How beastly ! Is not here

the throat of a fish ; the belly of a swine ; and the head of an ass ? Hath any sin more curses, more woes divinely denounced against it ! doth any one more insure, and ripen for eternal fire ? Woe, then, to those that tarry long at the wine ; and who are men of might to mingle strong drink.

“ Here comes * * * * the seceder, staggering through drink.—He vomits it up, while his companions make sport of him. Alas ! contrary to his Bible ;—contrary to his profession, his vows, and resolutions ;—contrary to the admonitions of his minister and friends ;—contrary to the rebukes of providence ;—contrary to the repeated challenges of his own conscience, he hath long too much haunted the company of graceless persons, at their diversions, their occasional feasts, and in the tavern ; often, by this means, he hath neglected to attend a praying society, and even the regular performances of evening-worship in his family ; and now God is exposing him to public ignominy by his graceless companions. What can a professed witness for Christ, and mourner over the sins of the land, mean to relish company, in which profane oaths, scoffing at religion, or useless chat, are almost all that he hears ! What can he mean, thus to dishonour God, ruin his family, in at least their spiritual concerns, and destroy himself ! By so many repeated returns to his wickedness, he is grown so hardened in it, that I fear it will soon bring him to a wretched and infamous death ;—a sudden stumble into the depths of hell ! How will he relish his bottle, his wonted chat, his wicked companions there ! God forbid that I should ever seem to love the company of such as I would not wish to

live with for ever : and that, by a silliness in compliance with the fashions of this world, I should harden my conscience, and damn myself, and my family.

“ Now I am exceeding hungry ; and have but “ little to buy food.” Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Quickly shall I get beyond the reach of hunger, when perhaps those, who to-day riot in luxury, and fill their tables with vomit, shall perish therewith. “ I “ have entered this inn ; but am no welcome guest : “ I am stared at ; and what I ask, is, in their pre- “ sent hurry, hardly brought me.” It is not grace, but money, grandeur, gluttony, and drunkenness, that recommend a man here.—“ My bashful visage, “ and mean apparel, tempt the very servants to con- “ temn me : though in Christ I be far greater than “ Philopœmen, lord of Greece ; yet here I must pay “ for my ill looks.”—Rejoice, my soul ; this is but my conformation to the image of God’s Son.—But, blessed Jesus, thy thoughts are not men’s thoughts, nor thy ways as their ways. How often, in the vilest rags of my corruption, hast thou embraced me, carried me to thine inner-chamber of ravishing nearness to thyself ! fed me with the bread which thou hast prepared, and with the wine which thou hast mingled ? —And therefore, since thou, earth, despisest me, I shall repay thee in thy own coin : when many say, Who will show us any good ? my heart shall count all but loss and dung to win Christ ; and cry, “ Lord there is none upon earth whom I desire besides thee : lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me ;

so shalt thou put more gladness into my heart, than when corn and wine abound."

"What a fine lodging is this inn!" Yet Adam, under the shadow of a tree, Abraham in his tent, was happier, than, I suppose, any that dwell here. Outward advantages are but heaven's crumbs, of which the dogs have often the largest share: a man's life and happiness consist not in the abundance of what he possesseth. Though I have no such mansions, yet am I not poorer than Jesus, who had not where to lay his head: Content can lodge in little room; why then should we rack the inventions of art, and exhaust the materials of nature, to build houses, rather prisons, for ourselves upon earth? How Heaven, with laughter, surveys our vain toil; and buries madmen in the heaps of houses, and of wealth and honour, which they raise? How often do mortals exhaust more time, more labour and care to build their own, than to build the house of the Lord! How often the house rather dwells in her master, than he in her! It is the master who should dignify the house; not the house him: but, alas! how many stately houses are but owl's nests, habitations of devils, and cages of every unclean and hateful birds? men therein live chiefly to laugh, swear, game, whore, eat, drink, and spue; strive to have every thing good in the house but themselves.—Is Satan landlord here? hath this householder given him his power and authority? and do the rest of the family approve of the master's deed? are all content to be the willing slaves of lust?—Let me look for a "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens:" let me haste away

from this : she is polluted and mortal, as well as her master : no habitation is pure, and sure, but God himself : let him be my dwelling-place in all generations.

“ What fine pictures are in yonder gallery.” Rather, how coarse draughts are they, in respect of God’s works of nature and grace ; and especially his adequate, his express image in his Son ? On this, Lord, may I with unceasing wonder for ever gaze ! What is our world, but a large room hung round with pictures ? how many painted fanciful shadows and images of felicity, not felicity itself, see we here ! What numbers of men are partly pictures of peacocks, goats, asses, dogs, or swine, and partly images of the old serpent ! how many are painted sepulchres, partly of saints, and partly of Satan ! but how few are living pictures of Jesus, the mighty God, the Prince of Peace ! O let me be such : let my heart and life abound with true, not painted Christianity, that when I awake from the grave, I may behold thy face in righteousness, and be satisfied with thy likeness. “ Why do yonder pictures seem “ constantly to cast their eyes on me ? ” Thrice more blessed, that all JEHOVAH’s words of grace ever suit my changing, my diversified condition : On them let me hope, and to them let me look, in every time of need.

“ In yonder room the music plays : how marvelous the influence of melody ! she stills the roaring child, calms the furious passion, encourageth the timorous heart, and cures the tarantula’s poisonous bite ! ” Lord, how effectually hath the melody of thy voice in the gospel stilled my roaring

complaints, calmed my raging passions, animated my sinking spirits, and healed my painful wounds!—and how pleasant and refreshing is the voice of praise in dwellings of the righteous! “What skill it requires to tune and perform this music! yet how easily might the breaking or slipping of a string, or the sloping of a fret, mar it!” O what skill, what care is necessary to fit our heart for sacred joy and praise! and when attained, how easily may it, as well as outward delights, be marred!—Lord, fit me for that place, which, as it is said of Christian Bethlehem, hath hallelujahs and hosannas for her mirth, and all her labour praise.

“Yonder is a parrot in a cage: how far hath she been fetched for the sake of her feathers.” Alas! how far will immortal souls go; how long they will stoop for very vanity! How often are feathers, not real excellency, the object of our love! how many are esteemed only for their shining face, their smooth tongue, and their beautiful apparel! “Poor animal, how have thy pinions brought thee to a foreign prison, and perhaps confined thy master’s heart along with thee.” Ah! how often do external shadows of excellency prove hurtful to ourselves and others! how often do they encourage pride, flattery, and cursed dependance on man?—Bless the Lord, O my soul, for the liberty which I enjoy; but let it not prove my snare: the more of it I have, let me be the more devoted to and active in thy service. “This parrot can speak till she is fully enraged, and then she resumes her natural note.” And how many, with seeming sweetness, speak and hear of divine things, and flatter the Most High with

goodly words, while he smiles on, and prospers them, who are ready to curse him to his face, if he but touch them with a stroke of trouble !

“ Now I have paid my reckoning, and have nothing over : Alas ! what shall I do, if stopped on “ my journey ? ” How Jesus’ word ravisheth my heart ! I AM ; be not afraid. Doth not this I AM, leave a blank, which I may fill up with whatever good I please ? Is it not JEHOVAH’s saying to my soul, Art thou weak ? I AM strength : art thou poor ? I AM riches : art thou despised ? I AM honour : art thou in trouble ? I AM comfort : art thou sick ? I AM health : art thou dying ? I AM life : hast thou nothing ? I AM all things : justice, wisdom, power, mercy, goodness, holiness, truth, beauty, glory, and excellency, I AM : perfection, all-sufficiency, infinity, eternity, I AM : whatever is suited to thy nature or case, I AM : whatsoever is amiable in itself, or desirable to thee, I AM : whatsoever is pure, holy, pleasant, great, or good, I AM : I AM JEHOVAH thy God.—Be therefore content, my soul, thy God, thine ALL, remains to thee : how can there be room for other things in my heart, while it is thoroughly penetrated and filled with this great I AM, MY God, and MINE ALL ?

“ Now let me proceed on my journey.” So let me make inns, not habitations, of outward enjoyments, divine ordinances, and gracious frames : let me leave them behind, and push forward into everlasting rest.

“ Here is a nobleman’s burial : softer was his bed, “ more delicate his provision, richer his apparel, “ warmer his chamber, less his toil, more youthful

“ his age ; yet, lo, I live, and am healthy, while he
“ is dead ! how quickly hath his fast living brought
“ him to his grave ! ” Ah ! how laboured is the way
of most to ruin ! Ah ! how they toil ! how they
trouble and pain themselves to hasten forward, and
be fit for everlasting misery ! how many are saved
with less than half the labour !—Lord, how vain is
earthly happiness ! the rich and gay convince me
most of human misery : but how true is thy pro-
mise, that as my days, so shall my strength be !—
How little worse is my body, and how much better
my soul, of the numerous troubles of my life ! “ In
“ what expensive coffin, enriched with plates, with
“ handles of gold, lieth this great man ! how adorned
“ his hearse ! how splendid the retinue which attend
“ his funeral ! ” But will any, or all of these, recom-
mend him to his Maker ? or render his soul happier
in the future state ?—Will not a Redeemer’s arms
about my dead body, his angels attending my soul to
glory, be more magnificent than all this ?—Learn,
my soul, the vanity of earthly enjoyments : what is
great men’s power to do good, without the will, but
an enormous crime ! what their company, but an
hindrance of converse with themselves ? what most
of their advisers, but obstructions of the sincere and
advantageous counsels of conscience ? what their plea-
sure, but an awful unperceived loss of time ? what
their wealth, but a miserable change from poverty to
pain, from hope to fear ; what avarice or luxury
renders them wretched amidst plenty ? And what
parents, like sponges, suck in with care and covet-
ousness, their children often prodigally squeeze out
with pleasure.

“ Here, on the other hand, the farmers come from “ a rich feast, which their new Lord prepared for “ them.” You ransomed, what a rich bankrupt-feast has our new Lord, Jesus, the heir of all things, provided for us in the house eternal in the heavens ! how often, even here, have I sat with the King at his table, and been filled with the fatness of his house ! how often have I had meat to eat which the world knew not of ! “ Here a sign informs me of the way “ to such a place : and another shows me how far I “ have travelled.” Emblems those of such ministers as point out the way of life to others, but do not walk therein themselves ; emblems of my gracious attainments, which assure me that I walk, and make progress in God’s way.

“ Now the storm gathers : now darkness frowns, “ and horror lowers : but necessity obligeth me to “ proceed on my journey.” Think, my soul, how often the rolling clouds of vengeance stand as doubtful to obey heaven’s dread mandate, while Jesus’ mounting prayers uphold the falling blow. Let, therefore, no appearance of temptation or trouble cause thee to draw back : if thou dost, God shall have no pleasure in thee : Remember Lot’s wife.— Push forward to Jesus’ throne : the more I live on high, the less shall storms of tribulation annoy me ; for, If he give quietness, who can make trouble ? “ Now rise the winds : now falls the hail and snow : “ around me night resistless closeth fast : tempests “ come howling over my head.” He that regards windy troubles, shall not sow to the Spirit ; and he that regards the clouds of adversity, shall not reap everlasting life.—Through much tribulation it is de-

terminated, I must enter into the kingdom of my God : let me never wish the everlasting mountains of divine purposes, and of unchangeable truths, overturned for me.—O how far other storm do less guilty sinners now suffer in hell ? How far other storm did Jesus suffer for me, that amidst worldly tribulation, in him I might have peace ; have my crimson-crimes made white as wool ! in his blood let him wash me, then shall I be clean ; I shall be whiter than snow.

“ The bleating sheep, now sad dispersed, dig for
“ the withered grass, through heaps of mingled hail :
“ ye shepherds, lodge them well below the storm :
“ and watch them strict.” Lord, how are thy flock bestormed and scattered ? how many of them have but withered grass, empty discourses, for the food of their souls ! be thou their guide, their hiding-place from the storm, that none of them be lost. Rejoice, you good distressed, you noble few : rejoice, my soul ; the storms of wintry time will quickly pass, and one unbounded, one eternal spring encircle all.
“ Here the careless shepherd flees to the covert,
“ while the storm drives his scattered charge.” Ah ! how many such hireling pastors are in the church of Christ, who chiefly mind their own ease and gain ! who have no divine necessity laid upon them, as all hazard, to preach the gospel ! who make ministerial work as curt and easy as possible : count gain godliness ; and a large benefice, an agreeable charge !—Lord, turn the heart of our zealous fathers to their children ; lest thou come and smite the earth with a curse. “ Yonder shepherd, having, with inconceivable struggles, safely stationed his flock, covers
“ a naked member with his mantle.” Great Shep-

herd of God's sheep, what stroms of divine wrath, of persecution, and temptation, hast thou suffered, in order safely to station thy flock of slaughter, that none of them might perish ; nor any of them might be plucked out of thy hand ! how didst thou strip thyself of thy glorious robes, to cover our soul with thy righteousness, and preserve our life from danger ! “ Now he hounds his cur to bring back “ such as wander from their shelter.” How often doth Jesus, by devils and wicked men, wisely hound back his straying saints to their proper rest in himself !

“ How furiously the drift flies ! I see not where I “ am ! nor whither I go ! I have lost my way !—I “ seek in deep mire ! Must I die here ?—Why, fore- “ seeing the storm, did I venture into this desert ?” How often hath my sinful rashness brought me into deserts, and depths of adversity ?—But thrice-blessed Redeemer, who foresaw, and yet left his Father's bosom, to endure far heavier storms of wrath for me, he sunk in deep mire, where there was no standing. My soul, improve every trouble, to make me flee to him, from the wrath to come. “ Do not I hear the “ voice of one calling me back, and warning me of “ unavoidable danger if I proceed ?” And, after I dangerously wandered from the way, how often hast thou, Lord, sought me out, and caused me to hear a voice behind me, saying, “ This is the way, walk ye in it ?” And, while I have refused to obey the heavenly vision, how often hast thou laid violent, rather infinitely merciful, hands on me, and carried me out of danger.

“ Wrestling against the tempest, struggling

“ through the heaps of snow, I am out of breath.—
“ Alas! I know not where to flee.” When all refuges fail, cry, my soul, to my God, “ Lord, thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.”
“ I have fled to this old house ; but the drift penetrates, the wind threatens to overthrow it.” How like this crazy cottage is my naughty heart! Through the slothfulness of my hands, it droppeth through : my roof and walls of self-righteousness serve for nothing but to draw down vengeance on my head. “ My wretched refuge gives the final crack : let me escape for my life.” So, when convictions sweep away my refuges of lies ; when providence overturns the outward thing whereon I trusted ; let me escape to Jesus, the Rock higher than I.

“ Here is a petty inn, where I might find shelter : but I have nothing to spend ; and so cannot be welcome.” How often, my soul, hast thou so thought and spoken concerning Jesus my Saviour ? and yet darest thou say, that he ever did in any wise cast thee out ? “ Necessity forced me in : how kindly have the innkeeper and his family used a poor stranger.” Lord, reward them, by showing them mercy at that day.—Kind, I hope, Christian friends, silver and gold have I none ; but such as I have, “ I give you.” Seriously I beseech you to trust Jesus with your everlasting salvation ; receive, walk in, and live on the altogether lovely, the all-enriching Christ.

“ I am again on my journey : here some pass me, riding in close machines : what advantage have those above me in this storm !” But it is more fancied than real : for even now I ride with Christ in

the new-covenant chariot, the midst whereof is "paved with love for the daughter of Jerusalem;" a seat in which I would not exchange for all the machines on earth.—And were I once in heaven, this winter-journey will be forgotten; or will rather sweeten my everlasting blessedness.

"Now it is quite fair, calm, and clear." "His anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." "How white! how cold! and yet "earth-warming and fructifying that snow! and "how refreshful and purifying its water." How pure, comely, heart-purifying, warming, refreshing, and fructifying, are the words, the providences, the pardons, the consolations of God: may I never leave that snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock Christ. How purely and comely the saints, being washed in Jesus' blood, and filled with his grace! and how refreshful, purifying, warming, and fructifying their influence, where many of them live! But Lord forbid, that I should wash myself in the fancied snow-water of my legal duties, in order to recommend myself to thee. If I do, thou wilt plunge me in the ditch, and my own clothes shall abhor me. "The "sun sets, while I have far to go." Ah! how is human life dwindled down to nought, and finished ere it is well begun!—Upon how many doth their sun go down at noon! death overtakes them before they seriously begin to prepare for a future state.—But rejoice, my soul, I cannot lie out of my best lodgings to-night: "The Most High is my habitation, my dwelling-place in all generations." "The "sun sets in red; it will be a better day to-mor-

“row.” Jesus, my Sun of Righteousness, set in bloody suffering and death.—Hope, my soul, for a far better day of everlasting joy, of unbounded felicity.

“In this twilight the sun favours us with the reflection of his rays, that darkness may not surprise us unawares.” What a mercy are divine warnings of death :—If sickness seize us unripe for our change, what a mercy to be allowed to die gradually !

“Now the moon and stars begin to shine : but were ten thousand torches also lighted, they could not all make, nor retain the day.” Nothing but thy presence, thy smiles, O Jesus, can give day to my soul ; nothing else can enlighten my mind, or warm my heart. But, Oh ! when shall twilight, and momentary blinks of thy countenance, give place to noon-tide, to unceasing vision ? “How short is our winter-day !” How short is time in respect of eternity ! how short in respect of the work which we are called to do in it ! And will you, sons of men, by unnecessary sleep, idleness, or sinful wasting of it, shorten it still further ? Ah ! how will your mispent moments sting you at last ; bite like serpents, and sting like adders !

“Here on every side the furze abound : how high amidst this barren soil : how green amidst this winter-storm ! how often hurtful to the lips of the frisking lamb ! how often the lodging of robbers ! how apt to be taken for evil spirits or their residence, by the timorous, nightly traveller ! what excellent fence against the encroaching river.”—Ah ! how many corruptions abound, and flourish in my weak and foolish heart ! amidst what storms of trouble do these cursed ever-greens retain their fresh-

ness and vigour ! how their garnished and blooming appearances hurt my tender graces ; my faith, my love, my spiritual desire ! what sources, what means, of awful robbery committed on my God, my soul, my neighbour ; what residence, nay, what cursed progeny, of devils are these hurtful lusts !—What fearful hindrances of the River of Life's breaking into my heart ! “ The best way of destroying the furze “ is to burn them, and dig them out by the root ; “ were this done, what tender pasture for the flock “ might arise in their stead ! ” Lord inflame my heart with thy love : let it burn within me : let thy word pierce to the centre of my soul : so shall the deeds of the body be mortified, and tender graces grow up in their stead.

“ Alas ! I am entangled among forsaken coal-pits !—I am gone !—I am fallen into one of them ! “ Ah ! how I am bruised !—How marvellous that “ there is so little water here !—Must I die ?—let “ me cry for relief : ”—Perhaps God, my former deliverer, will direct somebody to hear my voice, and draw me out.—Chiefly, let me commit my soul to Jesus, my Almighty Saviour.—“ Do not yonder “ stars shine with unusual brightness ? ” The more lovely, the deeper sunk in trouble I have been, the clearer have been my views of heaven. I have had as pleasant discoveries of Christ in the deepest afflictions, as in the most spiritual ordinances.—Beware, my soul, of being more sensible of thy grief, than of thy pleasure. Hath not God said, that he would dwell in the thick darkness ? O happy retirement, where he is present ! happy prison, where he is my companion ! happy banishment, where he is my at-

tendant ! happy poverty, where he is my inexhaustible portion ! happy malady, where he is my medicine, my physician ! happy mire, where underneath me are his everlasting arms ! happy wants, where he is my Father, and my friend ! happy any thing, where he is my all in all !—He is all eye, to see mine affliction : all ear, to attend my cry ; all arm, to help and caress me : he is all wisdom, to know when and how to deliver me ; all love, all bowels of compassion to pity me, and to move him to help me ; all grace and mercy, to forgive my sins, and supply my wants ; all power, to vanquish my foes, and redeem my soul : he is all holiness, to sanctify me ; all favour, to compass me about as with a shield ; all equity, to justify me freely through his grace, and render tribulation to them that trouble me ; all faithfulness, to make his exceeding great and precious promises, yea, and amen, to my soul : He is all care, to keep me night and day ; all robes to cover my nakedness ; all provision, to content and satiate me : all cordials, to refresh and delight me ; all wealth, to enrich me ; all light, to please and instruct me, and render me a shining star in the kingdom of the Father ; all glory, to reward and crown me for ever. How royally I live on hopes of full reversion ! how my whole being is blessed ! amply while I live ! amplest when I die ! In a little, little while, the child of grief shall hide his care-sick head in the dark corner, and on the easy pillow of a grave : in a little, little while, the ransomed worm shall leave his blackened mire, and mount on angel'swings, mount his Jesus' throne : the brand half burning, plucked from hell, shall be raised to endless crowns.

“How suddenly is relief come!—Here descends
“a rope, attended with a lanthorn.—Let me fix my-
“self in the former, that my friends may draw me
“from this rueful dungeon.—I am out!—Friends,
“may the God of Israel reward your kindness;
“gladly should I accept your offered lodging to-
“night, did not necessity oblige me to go home.”—
There is but a step between me and death; strive,
my soul, to finish thy work in its season: “There
is no knowledge, nor device, nor work, in the grave,
whither I go.” How stupendous hath the kindness
of God to me always been! How often hath he
brought me into sore troubles, that he might load
me with the most sweet deliverance! how often hath
he drawn me from the confines of hell, with the
cords of his enlightening and attracting Spirit and
promise!—How often hath he rescued my soul from
the gates of death! O his gracious, his wonderful
preservation of me just now! “I find I must go
“halting; but affliction from the hand of God,
“should not bear the name.” Lord, by the sinful
falls which thou knowest, my soul is so bruised, that
I must go halting to my grave; but let me rejoice,
that beyond it the lame man shall leap as an hart,
and the tongue of the dumb shall sing: death and
the grave, or rather the glory of God, shall cure all
my complaints.

“Now the generous friends, who drew me out,
“are gone.” But, blessed Redeemer, neither my
Gadarene intreaties, nor my horrid abuse of thee,
can make thee leave me, or forsake me—Thrice-
sweet love, that unchangeably glueth and fixeth thy
heart to me and mine to thee: Thrice-blessed co-

venant and oath of God, Never to turn away from me to do me good ! " Here my wonted friend haughtily rides by, without vouchsafing me one look ; " though his horse could have carried us both home. " I may die here for him." How many friends, like flies, couch beneath the winter-shower ? But when Jesus, the HIGH AND LOFTY ONE, who disdainfully rides by a king, an emperor, a sultan, or a czar, and laughs at the worms that rise so high, passeth by me, he bestows the kindest looks ; and often, often hath he given me his hand, and caused me to ride with him in his gospel-chariot :—therefore poor and despised as I am ; Lord I will never forget thy statutes, nor the word upon which thou hast caused me to hope. " How, amidst the dark, his horse-heel strikes " fire from the stone !" In my night of adversity, let convictions of worldly vanity, views of Jesus' glory, and sparks of divine truth, otherwise unobserved, shine forth : let patience and resignation, unexercised in prosperity, clearly discover themselves. " What a mercy, for weak and halt me, that the way " is here pathed." O the transcendent merey, that Jesus the forerunner hath pathed my way to glory ! that I see the print of his steps before me, in every trouble ! he was in all points tempted like as I am, yet without sin ; and in all my afflictions, he is afflicted.

" I can go no further, till I breathe a while : the " air exceedingly chills my body : let me warm my " heart at the celestial fires above. Now reigns " half-orbed the moon ; now she walketh in brightness." Just emblem of our present world : how unsettled her state ! she receiveth all her lustre from

Jesus the Sun of Righteousness ; but never shines, to our apprehension, but when we are far from him ! Lord, no created comfort of nature or grace shines, but with thy brightness : all are nothing in comparison of thee : when I enjoy thy presence, my soul counts them but loss and dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of thee : then all my powers cry out, “ Whom have I in heaven but thee ! and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.” “ This moon is very useful to the late traveller ; and shadowy sets off the face of things, but is a lamp fit only for the night, and blusheth at her own dimness before the rising sun.” What dark and shadowy views of divine things do we obtain in instituted ordinances ! But, O Jesus, hasten that eternal day, when the moon of our present world, the moon of present ordinances, of passing frames, and imperfect grace, shall be for ever ashamed to appear. “ Doth not yonder moon rule the tides of the spacious deep ? ” How sadly doth the influence of a present world make the tides of sin and hell to flow within my heart !—And shall not those who have her for their portion, have the lowest hell for their everlasting possession ? “ What but the interposing moon eclipseth the sun’s bright glory from our view ? “ what but the earth interposing between her and him, turns her, when full orb’d, into darkness ? ” Do not created comforts interposing between Jesus and my soul, veil his countenance from me ? What but an earthly heart, interposing between him and ordinances, graces, or outward enjoyments, make them lose their true, their useful lustre ?—Ought not I always to appear as the moon ? If sinful prac-

tices eclipse my glory, what multitudes must witness my shame! Let me then have grace to walk like her in brightness, till glory place me beyond her, in the inheritance of the saints in light.

“How rich this starry firmament!” Thrice noble pasture of the mind! O garden of the Deity! paradise unlost, where I meet my God in every view! Ye stars, shall I call you full-blown lilies? or lamps, hung in golden chains of will divine? or nightly sparks,—glowing embers on heaven’s broad hearth?—Even you stars, whose beams set out at nature’s birth, are scarce arrived on our coasts;—what hand behind the scene, what arm almighty put your wheeling globes in motion, launcheth you through the illimitable void, or winds up your vast machines! You globes of heavenly fire, my Father’s pupils, the channels of his benign influence to men,—how far you shine, and sing my Saviour’s praise? with what ravishment you warn my fainting heart, that weak bespattered I, amidst countless angels and men redeemed, shall for ever shine as a star in the unseen expansion of the kingdom of the Father!

“Yonder stalks the blazing comet.” Stupendous wanderer! long unseen, what distant regions of creation hast thou visited these numerous seasons! Rather, my blazing Jesus, where art thou these near two thousand years? Why tarry the wheels of thy chariots? why art thou so long a-coming? when wilt thou return to our skies, that the earth and works therein may be burnt up? “Now dance the lightnings of the north: the blazing meteors shoot: the whole firmament courseth in a maze of light.” O how the glances of my God run through the

globes, rule the bright worlds, and move their frame! broad sheets of light compose his robes; his guards are living fire.—Rejoice, my soul, thy God shall come, and “shall no more keep silence: a fiery stream shall issue from before him;” ten thousand angelic flames shall minister unto him: then, then will I go to God’s arms; to God mine exceeding joy.

“Azure fields of sky; rich curtains of my Father’s rest; vails of his throne;” When will you rend asunder from the top to the bottom, that Jesus with his ransomed may enter; when will you give way to the “new heavens, and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness?” “Unseen heavens, how glorious within! how amazing your extent! Vast concave! ample doom! were mine eye capable to take in thy whole dimensions, perhaps our sun, as insignificant, should escape my notice.” But what is thy glory, thy extent, but a mean, a narrow nothing for my God of love? when shall I visit thy blissful regions?—O JEHOVAH, when shall I come to thee? when shall I see thee as thou art? when shall I bask in the unceasing rays of redeeming Godhead; and melt amidst thy noon-tide love? When shall I drink my fill of that fulness of joy, and of those rivers of pleasure which are at thy right hand for evermore?—If views of thy sovereignty, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, faithfulness, unbounded goodness, and love, so now sweeten my bitterest trials, what must it be to enjoy thee as thou art, where there is neither sin, nor sorrow, nor death, nor pain!—to live, to be lost for ever in redeeming love! O how the thought of being for ever with my

Christ, and having a three-one God, mine everlasting; all in all, ravisheth my soul, and almost plucks her from this mortal frame!—O how my enraptured heart is over-charged with bliss!—wild waste, shall I call thee Peniel? Cold night, shall I call thee the flames of JEHOVAH's love?—Did ever I think that musing could have kindled such a burning in my breast? did I ever suppose that so much of God could be enjoyed on earth! Perhaps it is Christ's anointing me for my burial.

“Let me now rise and proceed on my journey.” Let neither the shrieks of the owl, nor the fear of demons, overwhelm me with dread: my God, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, keeps and watcheth over me: his angels compass me about: quickly shall his attending mercy finish my trouble; and his everlasting arms more than refresh me from weariness. “The clock strikes ten.” Sweet knell of my departing hours! when shall the last strike! when shall the mighty Angel swear that time shall be no longer? ETERNITY, ETERNITY, the ETERNAL God, is all my joy: I have got length of days into my mind, let me now see thy salvation: if life be measured by the implement thereof, hath not God done more for me than for those of an hundred years old? was ever such a debtor to redeeming grace? It is enough that my Jesus liveth: let me go to see him when I die.

“Now I travel through a burying-place: here
 “the ardent glories of the sparkling eye are eclipsed;
 “the charming tongue hath forgot her cunning: the
 “nervous arm is unstrung; my once comely friends
 “are turned into unsufferable loathsomeness.”

Lord Jesus, there is nothing altogether, nothing ever comely, but thyself : I look to thee, and am lightened : I believe, and look with triumph on the tomb. Eternity is written on my heart : how she kindleth into rapture at the thought of departing, and being with Christ ! at the thought of being for ever with the Lord ! “ How many, amidst the nocturnal “ glooms, are affrighted at a grave ! ” Why not at the inspired terrors of God ? why unthoughtful of entrance into a world of spirits ?

“ Yonder is my home, but how shall I pass “ this rapid, this swelling stream ? amidst my raptures, have I forgot the new bridge, which leads “ straight to my father’s house ? ” O what a bridge God built over the floods of death and hell, by loving me, and giving his Son for me ! Strange bridge ! founded in the death of God ; built up with blood, and paved with love divine ! how shall I, the ransomed of the Lord, pass over with everlasting joy on mine head ? “ I shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away : according to my faith, so shall it be unto me : thy rod and thy staff shall comfort me ; when I walk in darkness, the Lord will be a light unto me.”

“ Strangely do my heart and flesh begin to fail.” My soul, O thou of little faith, why dost thou doubt ? — Fear not, only believe ; do thou now believe, and thou shalt see the glory of God. — Is this dying work ? Alas ! how those cursed spies of unbelief and carnal fear have misrepresented it ! the comforter is come that should relieve my soul : he is returned to me “ with loving-kindness and tender mercies : ” my terrors are quite gone ; my outward pains are absorbed

For what then, would I exchange my being for ever with the Lord ; and being eternally filled with all the fulness of God ? Farewell, you filthy lusts, and winter blasts of woe ; I shall see you no more. Happily hath my Father made you drive me to my joyful home. Adieu, sweet pages of inspiration, amiable tabernacles of the Most High, in which I have often found him, whom my soul loveth.—Welcome undying glory.—Welcome angels, and spirits of just men made perfect : and chiefly, Welcome, O welcome, welcome, my unparalleled, my divine THREE, my God, and my all ; my God, and my all, for evermore. Amen.

THE
CHRISTIAN JOURNAL
OF A
SABBATH-DAY.

I HAVE awaked, but too late for thy day : this world hath six parts of our time allowed her by God, yet still cries, *GIVE, GIVE*: how violently hath she urged me to encroach on the Sabbath, by sitting too late the night before, or rising too early on the day after ?” Alas, my soul ! is this world six times more precious than Jesus, than *JEHOVAH*, that I should rob him of his seventh part of my time for her sake ?—Blessed Redeemer, come up higher in my heart ; and ye worldly concerns, get you down and sit below his footstool. “ When yesternight I retired to sleep, my mind was busied with ten thousand earthly cares : and to day I have waked with vain and carnal thoughts unnumbered, crowding in my heart.” Lord, why should these trouble me, but especially on thy day ? Vain thoughts are sin’s advocates, and thy adversaries ! O forgive their wickedness ! and as fire melts wax away, so let them perish at the rebuke of thy countenance. How long shall vain, shall vile thoughts lodge within me ? how long shall the august, the everlasting state of things, be to my soul as a dark shadow, as the image of a dream ?—On this sacred morning, why do not I live as if just entering into eternity ? as if beholding the glorious appearance of the great God

my Saviour : —Are not eternal things as certain now as they will be hereafter ? Why then live I not always in the believing view, and under the deep impression of the heavens vanishing ; the elements melting ; the earth flaming ; the angels every where dispersed, to gather the elect from the four winds of heaven ; and of their ascending to meet the Lord in the air, and be for ever with the Lord ?—What a trifle will the pleasures, honour, or wealth of this world,—nay, of ten thousand worlds, be to me then ?

“ But what divine authority have I for the peculiar satisfaction of this day ?” Reason herself informs me, that men being made for eternity, their time should be partly sequestered to the contemplation of eternal things ; that being of a social nature, they ought to associate in their principal business, the worship of their God ; and that, to avoid distraction, it is proper that there should be one fixed season of public devotion, common to all. In the well known precept, which to mark its perpetuity, and moral obligation, was written by God himself, on a table of stone ; and was inserted in the very centre of that universal, that permanent rule of righteousness, divinely published from Sinai’s top, and into which ceremony never entered,—is not the seventh part of our time peremptorily challenged for the religious service of God ?—Is not the divine mandate there established, on the moral, the extensive grounds of God’s own example, and his blessing the Sabbath-day.*—Was not this sacred season instituted in paradise : made for man, while no typical ceremony had yet commenced ? In six days the heavens, and

* Exod. xx—11, Deut. x. 4.

the earth, and all their hosts, were finished : on the seventh, God rested from all his work ; he blessed the Sabbath-day, and sanctified it : How ? he set it apart for his especial service ; and for the bestowing of his peculiar favours on men.* When redemption was published, was the privilege of the Sabbath revoked ? was the duty of observing it superseded ?—Surely not : On that day, the patriarchal sons of God jointly presented themselves before the Most High.† Nor had the thunders of Horeb uttered their voice, when the Hebrew lawgiver spoke of the observation of the Sabbath as a well known custom ; and to honour it, the manna was divinely restrained and preserved.‡ Of the Jewish religion, how great a part the observance of the Sabbath was, the law and the prophets do clearly show.—What vestiges of the seventh-day Sabbath, for many ages, remained with the ancient heathens, their histories still mark.—Derived they this observance from the Jews, whom they so heartily despised and abhorred ? Surely not ; but from their own most ancient progenitors. The outward observance was partly remembered ; the true design was forgotten.—Was not the observation of the Sabbath among the nations, when ceremonies should be no more, plainly foretold ?§ Is it not divinely demonstrated, that there remaineth a Sabbatism, a keeping of Sabbath, for the New-Testament people of God ?|| Had not Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath, a power to change the season thereof at his pleasure ? Did not his resurrection, his resting from the laborious purchase of our salvation, more richly deserve

* Gen. ii. 2, 3.

† Gen. xxxv. 9.

‡ Exod. xvi. 23; 30.

§ Isaiah lvi. 23.

|| Heb. iv. 9.

a weekly memorial, than his rest from creation did ?—was it not proper, that the time of the New-Testament Sabbath, sacred to the memory of a finished redemption, should suggest that we Christians are not to labour for life, and then inherit our restful reward ; but our privilege precedes our duty, and our labour of gospel-holiness follows our entrance into a state of new-covenant rest ?—Was it not divinely predicted, that the eighth day, the day immediately succeeding the Jewish sabbath, should, with Christians, be the stated season of public devotion ?* Did not Jesus' glorious resurrection ; his repeated visits to his assembled disciples ; his noted effusion of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, on the first day of the week ; consecrate the same to the honour of his finished work ?† and, for this reason, is it not by inspiration, honourably termed the Lord's day ?‡—On it, did not the inspired apostles, and their followers, for our example, ordinarily assemble for hearing the word ; for sacramental breaking of bread, and for public prayer ?§—On it, were not the Christian churches divinely commanded to collect for their poor ?|| And where is now the professor, who contemning the observance of the Sabbath, any while retains the least shadow of a Christian practice ?—Blessed queen of days, on thee may I be always in the Spirit : may I count thee my delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable. Be shut, my heart, to every vain thought : let no idle, no evil communication proceed from my lips ; let me rest from my servile, rest from my sinful, my legal works.

* Ezek. xliii. 27. † Mark xvi. 1, 2, 9. ‡ John xx. 19, 26.
 Acts ii. Rev. i. 10. § Acts xx. 7. || 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.

“What a mercy for man is the Sabbath!” What weary pilgrims, wandering in pathless deserts, were we, but for this pledge of immortality, whereon, from inexhausted stores, God pours down his spiritual blessings on us; and whereon we sit basking in the rays of his countenance, forget things below, and, with angels and saints, converse with him, are warmed with love to him, live on him, and in him; and express our joy in songs of grateful praise! But how transcendent their felicity, who celebrate the everlasting Sabbath above! who being far removed from weariness and pain, and rid of every vile, every impertinent thought, enjoy God and the Lamb, to the utmost stretch of their boundless wishes.

“Awake, my soul, the wings of the morning
 “have begun their rapid course; the early sun, the
 “warbling birds sing their Creator’s praise.” Almighty Father, all things thy name resound, thou eternal Cause, Supporter, End of all. Wake up, my soul, and join the choir: thy Maker’s praise proclaim.—But soft! a Maker’s praise is not the half thou owest: praise thy REDEEMER; praise: On this blessed day, thy Jesus rose; rose early for thy good. Up, sleeper, from thy bed: at earliest hour, from sadder bed, for thee the SAVIOUR rose.—On this great day he finished the purchase of my bliss; then early burst the bonds of death;—early forsook the mansions of the dead: and shall the bands of sloth, of sin, or sleep, forbid my early feasting on his love?—prevent my early triumphs in his praise?—Wake, wake, my soul, praise thy righteous, thy risen, thy exalted Lord: at the loved name awake.—“But

“ why may not I, with others, sleep till eight or nine o’clock ? ” What others, my soul, are those ? canst thou believe them Christians, who rise early on their labouring days, and loiter on the Sabbath ? Art thou willing to hazard an eternity with them ?—For a few hours of rest to thy body, a few delicious hours of sloth, wilt thou rob thy Maker, and run the risk of taking thy bed for ever in hell, where they have no rest, day, nor night, but are tormented in the presence of the holy angels, and of the Lamb ?—Am I a candid expectant of everlasting fellowship with God, if I curtail, if I am weary of that one day in seven, which is the amiable pledge of it ?—Can I long for unceasing glory, if I do not long, and watch for the weekly Sabbath, more than they that watch for the morning ?

“ Let me essay solemn worshipping of God by myself : dare not, my soul to appear at public worship, without having performed secret devotion.” How dead is my heart ! how distracted my thoughts, in the entrance on this duty !—But how delightful ! how suited to my case, is the divine oracle which I now read ! how her mysteries transport me into pleasing wonder ! how her promises melt my soul ; animate my faith ; encourage my hope, and inflame my love ! “ Let me pour out my heart to God in prayer.” With strong cries and tears Jesus prayed ; let not my requests merely flow from, nor freeze between my lips. Think, my soul, of the sacred nature of the day ; put off thy shoes of carnal affections ; “ for the place where thou standest is holy ground.”—I am sick of this world and her toys : O to be where Jesus, lovely Jesus dwells !

—This naughty heart is like a clock with broken wheels : Lord, refit me—I can bear thy absence no longer ; make no tarrying, O my God. Vile wandering heart, the range of the mountains of vanity is thy pasture, thou traversest the whole earth in a moment : Ah ! true child of him who goeth to and fro, through its ample bound, to devour ; to do mischief ! Ah ! “ wild ass, used to the wilderness, snuffing up the wind at her pleasure ! ”—Fixed with much pains and labour, how often hast thou suddenly broken my bands, and cast my cords from thee !—O Jesus, arrest her by thy love.—Ah ! how heavy, how hard, how cold and dull, is this heart of stone ! how sin sits triumphant ; and every grace lieth buried under its weight ! How she prevents my elevation to God ; my tasting of the heavenly joys ! how she enervates my inward powers ; pulls back my faith ; and chills my love ! how she tramples on smiling mercy ! laughs at awful frowns ! Was ever heart like mine ? Lord Jesus, bathe her in thy blood : nought else can melt this flint away.—O when shall these years of sin, and months of woe, come to an end ; and never-dying holiness and glory fill their room ? When shall I fix my rest in Jesus’ arms ? When shall I leave my sin ; and drown my sorrow in the river of his endless joy ? “ But why so much “ prayer to-day ! ” Alas ! my soul, is prayer, the eldest sister, the mother of exalted praise, so unesteemed, so undesired by thee ! How inestimable the mercy of this privilege : how sweet the true exercise ! how encouraging the hopes of a gracious answer ! how sublime the honour to converse with God ! Can the sons of earth, unwearied, spend whole

days in useless chat, in laboured folly! and shall one who hopes himself heaven-born, account his prayers his toil?—Lord Jesus, I come to thee, a monster vile; a monster born! Ah! sevenfold worse by sinning, since my birth; a transcendent sinner! O let thy breath, thy blood, thy mercy, plead for me! O to see, to feel thee, a brother born for adversity? Spare, spare thy brother, the malefactor who flees to thy refuge!—I am ashamed; I blush to lift up my guilty head, or to show my polluted visage. I dread lest my prayers awake the thunders of thy wrath; and kindle thy just, but flaming rage against me.—But where can a sinner but to a Saviour flee? Here at thy cross, beneath thy bleeding love, I lay my non-such,—ah! my wicked, worthless, wretched self.—O let unmatched mercy grant my life! I cannot, I dare not, I will not let thee alone, till I share thy forgiving grace. Because I am a stiff-necked rebel, go up with me to thine ordinances, and pardon mine iniquity for thy name's sake, for it is very great. Except thy presence go up with us in our arduous, our awful work, carry us not up hence. Let me see the goings of my God and my King in the sanctuary. Lord, my soul thirsteth as dry land for thee; thirsteth to “see thy power and thy glory, as I have seen thee in the holy place: Hide not thyself; my spirit fails.”

“Let me now think of his loving kindness.”—How astonishing, that a Saviour is provided for men, while sinning angels are left to perish in their crimes! that we peaceably enjoy Sabbaths, and other divine ordinances, while many nations are without them; or obtain them amidst distracting alarms of persecu-

tion and war : O what a matchless Redeemer ! what great and everlasting salvation ! what precious oracles and institutions God hath provided for us ? Wonder rise, and endless praises flow.

“ Family-worship being over, let us sit down to “ breakfast.” Sweet emblem of that feast which God, in the mount of gospel-ordinances, hath prepared for all people.—Emblem of the feast, the everlasting feast of the redeemed in heaven.—Can I be a Christian, and not season my meals, chiefly these on the Lord’s day, with thoughts of Christ ! Can I behave as one, if I season them not with pious conference concerning him, as I have opportunity ? How often, by sharing a Sabbath-meal with professors, whose converse might have tempted one to suspect, they had not so much as ever heard whether there be a Christ,—hath my soul been quite defiled, deadened, and unfitted for holy duties ! How often have my ears been dinned with the unedifying recital of common news ! the prating about trifles ? or shocked with the murderous reproach of a neighbour ! How often have I retired from them, as ravished Tamar from her brother’s incestuous couch ! how covered with shame ! overwhelmed with grief ! trembling with fear ! and, alas ! infected with stupidity and guilt ! when vexed awhile with their ungodly, their trifling discourse, how often have my inward corruptions suddenly checked my concern ! how quickly varnished the crime, and induced my lips to take part in the carnal communication ! Deceitful heart, polluted tongue, let me never forgive you. Did Jesus die to purchase our Sabbath ! and dare you prostitute it to so base a purpose !—Carnal professors of

the Christian name, what hurt hath my soul suffered from occasional fellowship with you ! May God henceforth, on every sacred occasion, keep me far from the door of your house. It is the way to death, and your guests are in the depths of hell. Infamous thieves, will ye, for no end, jointly combine to rob the Most High, " of whom ye say that he is your God ?" Ye grovelling, ye loathsome vermin, who even amidst sacred time, crawl on the earth, and wallow in the stench and putrefaction of their neighbour's torn character ; have you forgotten that to be carnally minded is death ? and that God hath charged us to speak evil of no man ? What have you to do in the way of Cain ? in the error of Balaam ? Why will you perish in the gain-saying of Korah ? Know you nothing of your inward case : nothing of Jesus, and his love, to furnish you talk ?

" Now I have dressed and examined myself in the " glass." Let me thus go to the house of the Lord, in simple, grave, and decent apparel. There, let no gaudy appearance evince, that dress is my deity : or tempt my neighbour to suspect that I, with the unchristian crowd, spend more of the sacred morning in dressing my body, than in preparing my heart. Dare not, my soul, for the gay decking of this mortal body, to forego so much as the first moment of the public worship of the living God. Dare not to make God the patron, the reset of thy theft, by bringing into his house, trumpery of apparel, worn at the expense of the merchant, who unduly lieth out of his price. Dare not to go hither, without the robes of a Redeemer's grace as the sure pledge, that thou shalt quickly put on the royal attire of immor-

tal bliss. Dare not to go thither, without a serious examination of thy state, thy sins, thy graces, thy wants, and thy mercies. Without knowledge of thy state, how canst thou know what is the portion allotted thee by God ; how canst thou presume to eat his children's bread ? Without discerning thy sins, how canst thou apply reproofs, pour forth acknowledgments, or feel thy need of a Saviour ? Without knowing thy graces, how canst thou order thy spiritual exercises ? Without discerning thy wants, how canst thou offer up thy desires, or receive Jesus' tendered fulness ? Without observing thy mercies, how canst thou give God thanks, admire his love, or come boldly to his throne of grace ? Survey thyself in the mirror of his word ; nor inattentive to the discovery, do thou straightway forget what manner of man thou art.

“ Now I go forth to my journey.” And renouncing my wisdom, my righteousness, and strength, let me go forth to Jesus my ALL IN ALL ; let all the powers of my soul go out to meet thy glorious Bridegroom.—“ Comes yonder barber from 'shaving his customers ? hath yonder servant been purchasing goods in the adjacent shop ? or brings he them from the neighbouring carrier's house ?” Ah me ! have the people here no Bible, no fear of God ! have they forgotten the Almighty's solemn charge, to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy, and to do no work thereon, neither master, nor child, nor servant ? Know they not how merchandise, and other carnal employs on Sabbath, have brought God's desolating vengeance on families and nations ?* Dare the conscience of

* Neh. xiii. 18. Jer. xvii. 27.

these criminals pretend what they do, to be either a work of necessity or of mercy ; how easily could it have been performed yesternight, or delayed till to-morrow ?—Friends, how absurd, for this puny convenience, this pitiful gain, to offend your Maker ? to ruin eternally your soul ! God forbid, that by unseasonably smoothing my face, I should entail on my whole man the everlasting fire of his wrath ! that by robbing my God of the honour of his sacred day, I should bring his curse on my property ! “ Perhaps “ some within, post their accounts, write their letters “ of trade, or transact a thousand unnecessary points “ of the work of the house.” But doth not the Omniscient above, and their conscience within them, mark their iniquity, that it may be brought forth in the day of the Lord ?

“ How delightful this mansion, southward of these “ rugged rocks ! how amiable it is rendered by the “ reflected rays of the sun !” O when shall Jesus’ church appear as a city towards the south, enlightened and warmed with the rays of his countenance ! O to have my soul fixed in the presence of the Most High ! to see his face ; walk in the light thereof ; and be thereby changed into the same image from glory to glory ! to have my whole life a continued journey towards the south land of everlasting rest ! a clear reflection of the all-elucidating and attracting loveliness of Christ. “ But do not these lofty mountains strike me with solemn awe ? do not these “ rugged pillars of heaven, exhibit the majesty of “ their Creator ?” My God, thou art great, and I know thee not ; by reason of thine highness, I cannot endure ; great fear is due unto thee, in the

meeting of thy saints ; and thou art to be had in reverence of all that are round about thee.—Nor is thy mercy inferior to thy greatness. High and lofty One, who inhabitest eternity, and dwellest in the high and holy place, it is thine to dwell in Christ ; and “ with him also that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, to revive the heart of the humble, and the spirit of the contrite ones ! ” O to have my haughtiness bowed down, and my loftiness made low ; and the Lord alone exalted this day ! Bear me witness, omniscient God, that even now I cast my idols to the moles and to the bats, to go into the holes of rocks, and the cliffs of the ragged rocks, for fear of thee, and for the glory of thy Majesty. “ How am I indebted to the mercy of God, that my way to his “ house is not over these steep ascents ! and that I “ am not forced to go from mountain to hill, to seek “ the way of the Lord ! ” But how astonishing, that Jesus made mountains of wrath, and of every thing dreadful, his way to me, that my way to God may be a plain ! O a plain, plain, pleasant Redeemer ! This, my soul, is the way, walk thou in it : he that hath mercy on me, shall lead me, and unto springs of living water shall he guide me.

“ Here I overtake some who go to the same solemnity with me : On what do they so warmly converse ? It is concerning the ministers who are to assist in dispensing the feast ; or upon some unedifying, and almost unintelligible dispute.”—O when will professed Christians grow wise ! With the boldness, but meekness of a follower of Jesus Christ, let me check them, and not hate them in my heart, by suffering sin upon them.—Friends, felt you

ever your pride, your legality, your unbelief, and other indwelling corruptions, mortified and weakened by any such converse? Was ever your love to Jesus inflamed? or your bands of spiritual ignorance, hardness, and stupidity loosed by it? If not, what have you to do with it, on so awful, so serious an occasion?—Rather, changing the subject to things more important, think, How long shall vain thoughts lodge within you? Where are you, in respect of your spiritual state and case? Is your heart right with God? Are you born from above? Are old things passed away, and all things become new?—Whence have you come? and whither will you go? What is the cause wherefore you come? What do you here? What think ye of Christ? What would you that he should do unto you? Doth your heart burn within you, while he talks with you by the way? What think ye, will the great minister of the sanctuary come to the feast? What know ye of his being truly invited? What token have you of his gracious design to come up? Hath he given you any eager desire, or freedom in wrestling for his presence? Hath he whispered into your soul any promise of his coming down to deliver us; of his going up with us, and giving us rest?—of his going before us into Galilee, that there we may see him?—of his doing better to us than at the beginning, making the showers to come down in their season, even showers of blessing, and making this the beginning of months to us?—What hath God done for your soul?—Is it one of us, who to-day shall betray the Son of God!—Lord is it I?—By such searching and instructive conference are not our hearts warmed?

do they not burn within us while we talk of the decrease, the astonishing decrease he accomplished at Jerusalem ?

“ Here we meet some riding about their civil business.” Strange ! why will not magistrates, invested with authority, like pious Nehemiah, repress such shocking enormities ? Why not rather risk the displeasure of the great, than dishonour their Sovereign, their God ? why so readily seize thieves and robbers of men, and so apt to overlook the open robbery of their Maker ? “ Here others drive the bleating flocks to an approaching market.” Alas ! must these ungodly drivers subject the poor innocents to the bondage of corruption, and render them unwilling instruments of dishonouring their Maker ? Since we cannot stop this, let us bewail it in secret places ; and be as earnest in the service of our God, as these men are in the service of their master, the devil, and the worship of their Deity, this present world. Ah ! how many more privately profane the Sabbath, by unnecessary preparation of food, cleansing of houses, and the like : Are such multitudes ignorant that God hath said, “ Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy ?—in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates.”—“ To-day some ride from this place, as if they reckoned gospel ordinances, and chiefly the Lord’s Supper, a dangerous plague.” Will they also ride off from death and hell ? How lately I knew one of these fugitives from the grace of God overtaken by death, perhaps by damnation, before night !—

Ah ! how like these wicked men is my heart ! how often she flies from the presence of the Lord ; because he is merciful and gracious ! how often, while I have been hearing his most precious truths, been praying to, praising him, or feeding on the symbols of his flesh and blood, hath she burst through every let, every band ! and hasted to escape away !

“ The last bell begins to ring.” Friends, is not this inviting sound a resemblance of Jesus’ crying, “ Whosoever will, let him come unto me and drink : Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters ; come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price ! Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely : Come with me from Lebanon : my spouse, with me from Lebanon : look from the top of Amana, Shenir, and Hermon, from the lion’s dens, from the mountains of the leopards. — Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away : I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse : — Eat, O friends : drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved ! ” If we be Christians indeed, let us be glad and rejoice ; quickly we shall hear the trumpet of God proclaim, “ Let my saints be gathered unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.” “ However, let us quicken our pace, that we “ may assemble at public worship in due time.” If we hope to sing the songs of the blessed in heaven, let us with the utmost care avoid giving disturbance to the worship of God on earth, by having to enter, and take our seat, in the midst of it. Let our practice declare, that the very beginnings of his praise are sweet to our soul,

“ Here I must give my collection.” This is

God's treasury ; according to my ability let me cast into it, and, by all means, give current coin : God seeth me. " It is but little, that I can give." Let me give it the more heartily, from love to Jesus Christ, who loved me, and gave himself for me. " This poor servant casts in more than his rich master, who will cheerfully lavish away considerable sums at a licentious ball, or riotous club : here one, coarsely attired, casts in pretty largely, while another, apparelled in silks and gay clothing, gives almost nothing." How void of conscience are the most ! how many will rather give a pound to the king of the children of pride, than lend a penny to the Father of mercies, who made and preserves them ! " Here a person rich and gaily attired gives nothing at all." Surprising : hath God freely given him so much ? and will he publicly refuse that he oweth, or will lend him one farthing ?—Let me never rob God, or his poor factors. Better my liberality should cause me to dress in a meaner attire, and take a scantier meal, than that Jesus should publicly condemn me to hell for with-holding more than is meet. Meanwhile, let me never give to be seen of men.

" Now I approach the church-door ; but for the greed of my penny the keeper refuseth me entrance." How unlike to the Lord Jesus, who saith, Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out ! " The psalm is raised." Let me sing with understanding, and make melody in my heart to the Lord. " O ! how my soul melts while I sing the line !—Already my sweet frame is fled. I scarce attend the sense of what my lips utter : standing in this crowd, I am weary of singing." Base heart,

bath a few minutes of heavenly music fatigued thy powers, and exhausted thy patience! Lord, pity me, for "I am carnal, sold under sin. The good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that do I."

"I have got pressed in." Rejoice, my soul, thy entrance into heaven shall be much more abundant: and now that I am in the house of God, let me desire nothing but God himself. "What mean this people to gaze on a poor stranger!" Is there no awe, no fear of God in their heart, that so insignificant a spectacle draws off their mind and eyes from their sacred work? Hath Satan power to wind about these gazers' necks, and lift up their eyes at his pleasure? Alas! how often do the most common and trifling incidents, the cry of a child, the barking of a dog, or the braying of an ass, decoy multitudes from attendance to the voice of the eternal JEHOVAH?—and, times without number, have the veriest trifles decoyed my heart from Jesus and his word.—"Around me there is room enough, and to spare: yet I, and other strangers meanly apparelled, must stand, perhaps till we faint, in the entries."* Will the people here, who have seats, before God, avow their respect of persons, and hazard his vengeance, by giving place to the great, not to the poor? With many, wealth is the all-comprehending excellency; poverty, the great defect, and the worst crime. But rejoice, my soul; when I enter the temple above, none shall question my sitting down with Jesus on his throne: With God there is no respect of persons. "In the time of praise, why observe I some gaily

* James ii. 1—11.

“attired press up to the most honourable seat?” Is it not criminal ceremony, and sinful presumption, thus to disturb the worship of God for the sake of imaginary honour?

“Prayer begins.” Let my soul be lifted up to God therein. Stand aloof, every wandering thought, every carnal care, while I worship my God. Base adulterers, will ye force me to vanity, to vileness, in the presence of Jesus Christ my husband?

“Sermon begins.” How suitable this subject! how it pierceth my conscience, melts my heart, and drops into it as honey from the honey-comb! Surprising; how knows this preacher my case, that he speaks so pointed, and represents it more exactly than I could! Every sentence is directed to me, as if none else were present. Surely, “it is the voice of God, and not of a man.”—Lord, thou hast ravished and captivated my heart. “Yonder people yawn, slumber and sleep.” O the sovereignty of God, who now breathes on my soul, not on theirs! O his patience, to bear such open affronts, and not dispatch the criminals quick to hell! O our stupidity, our wickedness, to slumber when God speaks, when he offers salvation to us in the most engaging manner! I dread Jesus, at last, speak a word to some of these sleepers, that will for ever keep them awake in hell. “Here the preacher hits my neighbour’s case and fault; here his periods are ill turned;—his language coarse, his voice grating! his expression ungenteel.” Deceitful heart, who taught thee to hear for my neighbour! Is any crime with him which is not in thee? Came I here, to judge how men affect mine ear? or to hear what God the Lord

shall speak? What spiritual leanness shall such trifling in holy things bring on my soul? how shall I answer for it at Jesus' bar?—Rate not the preacher by the ear, his phrase or accent: to truth thy reverence pay; not to her dress. NICE taste of dress is but the childish judgment of ill-humoured pride.—Blessed Jesus, to me let never the preacher talk alone; else I am at best but tempted to admire the worm, extol his order, or his mode: but thy voice, when heard, fires all my soul with love to thee; arms all my powers with rage against my inward lusts. “Treacherous heart, where art thou now? “hast thou left me as a corpse before God? and art “gone home to my house, my shop, my field, my “flock, &c.?” Lord, rebuke the evil, the carnal spirit, which hath taken possession of my soul. Ah! how long shall vain thoughts lodge within me?—“Now with pleasure I think on spiritual things, but “such as do not belong to the present purpose.” Into how many shapes will a heart deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, turn herself, to shun that which is good! Lord, seize and bind her, with thy Almighty love! “My heart again begins to glow.” O kindle her into a vehement flame. Let this sweet, this seasonable promise, sink to her centre: let it be engraven on her as with a pen of iron, and point of a diamond. “Sermon is finished.” May God signally bless it to the hearers: what of it touched my heart, let it ever abide there; let the Holy Ghost bring to my remembrance whatever Jesus hath said unto me.

“Baptism is administered.” Attend, my soul, with care. Here God displays our dreadful filth;

our damning guilt: to wash from that, and rescue from this, nought avails, but love divine. Here, how shines the Saviour's love! for us he shed his blood! he died! At the door of the womb, he, with his bleeding laver, waits to wash our soul, as she enters the world. "Is this infant, and was I, baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?" How sweet the view! all the divine three equally concerned for, interested in, working out, and honoured by, our salvation. Let therefore this infant; let me and mine, be washed in the blood, renewed by the Spirit, and devoted to the service of Christ. Let what I am, and have, be equally devoted to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: Let JEHOVAH be my Father; Jesus my Saviour; the Holy Spirit my sanctifier: all in one, my God and portion.—Let me examine myself. Have I received the baptism of the Holy Ghost in my inner man? Am I ingrafted into, and united with Christ? Am I a sharer of the benefits of the new-covenant? Am I born again, justified, adopted, sanctified, and entitled to eternal life? Doth my heart even now consent to accept these privileges? But let me remember my faults to-day: In baptism was not I solemnly sworn to be wholly and only the Lord's? but, alas! how have "other lords had dominion over me!" Ah! what room they have had in my heart! what service they have obtained in my life? With what millions unnumbered of vain and vile thoughts, words, and deeds, am I chargeable! How highly are all aggravated, as done against a solemn oath, and a God of love.

"Now we are to be feasted with the supper of
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"our Lord; feasted on his flesh and blood." (Let a knife be put to my throat, if I be not a man given to appetite after Jesus Christ, and nothing beside.) "Now the pastor debars the unworthy from the sacred banquet." Listen, my conscience, if thy name be found in this black roll: ponder how far in heart, or in practice, I am chargeable with these bloody crimes; faithfully charge home my guilt.—Ah! how each of these characters sting me to the quick! not one of these abominations, but I find lurking in myself.—Lord, "iniquities prevail against me;—but as for my transgressions, thou shalt purge them away." In thy all-cleansing blood, O cleanse the blood which thou hast not cleansed. "Now follows the sacred invitation to the feast." Listen, my soul, ponder, if thou hast but one scripture mark of these friends of Christ. Lord, methinks I know the plagues of my own heart; and look on myself as the chief of sinners: but ah! what a dwarf in religion! how withered a Christian must I be, that I can claim no other!

"How is my soul out of frame? but in obedience to thy dying command, Do this in remembrance of me; and depending on thy grace to supply all my wants, I come forward to thy table." "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. Open my mouth wide, and fill it." Cause me to "hunger and thirst after righteousness, that I may be filled." Innumerable fears and evils encompass me about: but let me break through them all, rather than see Jesus dishonoured by the long emptiness of his sacred table. Should we flee from him, because we know that he is a God gracious and merciful? did he die in our

stead, to make this rich provision for us : and dare we requite him by openly reproaching him, and his feast, in striving to be among the last to come to it ! Should we love seats, and depend on frames, more than God our Saviour ? Let me wash my heart and hands in his innocency, his righteousness, “ and so compass thine altar, O Lord. O send forth thy light and thy truth : let them lead me, let them bring me to thine holy hill. Then will I go to God’s altar ; to God mine exceeding joy.”—Encouraged by thy promise, “ To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word : the hungry he filled with good things, while the rich are sent empty away.” “ I sit down at this table.” A worthless guest indeed ! but, Lord, make me perfect through thy ~~compassion~~ ^{compassion} put upon me, as my wedding garment : O my King, sit thou with me, that my spikenard of grace may send forth the fragrant smell thereof. Now that I am set down to eat this gospel passover, cursed be all the leaven of corruption, known or unknown, which cleaveth to my soul. Lord Jesus, “ persecute and destroy it, from under these heavens : thy curse unto it.” Didst thou not die, to transfer the divine curse from my person of my sin ? Didst thou not leave this, thy once worn robe, in legacy to thy executioners my sins : quickly let them feel its influence : and, like the accursed fig-tree, wither away

“ The bread and wine are taken, and sanctified “ by the word and by prayer.” In this word I see the divine warrant, the design, and the manner of receiving this feast. May these outward elements effectually represent, seal, and apply Christ and his

benefits, to all his children who partake to-day. May they, by faith, distinctly discern, feed upon, and apply to themselves his person, righteousness, and blessings, thereby represented. And may no scandalous or grossly ignorant person, presume to eat of the children's bread. Lord, pity these assemblies where such, perhaps without the least trial, are cheerfully admitted to eat and drink damnation to themselves. Awful thought! perhaps just now thousands such, with their ministers allowance, crucify the Son of God afresh. Tremble, ye people, whose unnatural pastors, contrary to their solemn vows, to please your pride, open for you the gates towards hell, leading down to the chambers of death: who readily give you tokens of access, by profane communicating, to seal up, and confirm your eternal ruin.

But in the taking and blessing of these elements, methinks I see my adored Redeemer from everlasting chosen out of the people. I view him anointed, and duly furnished with every spiritual gift and grace, for his arduous work. Blessed be the Lord, who "laid help upon one that is mighty: hath called him in righteousness, and given him to be a covenant of the people; a light to lighten the Gentiles; and his salvation to all the ends of the earth:—that the Spirit of the Lord God is upon him, and hath anointed him to preach liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound; to bind up the broken hearted, to comfort all that mourn." Blessed for ever be the generous Son of God, who, that fatherless strangers, rebellious sinners, might share of his endless felicity, undertook our debt, assumed our debased nature, fulfilled

our bond service, and bore our awful curse ; rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and his “ delights were with the sons of men.” Blessed be he, for all the harbingers of his coming to save, the ancient types, preludes, promise, and prophecies : every one of which proclaim his alacrity therein.—O how my heart admires his kindness ! heaves with desire after, and burns with love to HIM, who first “ loved me and gave himself for me !” How she hungers and thirsts to be filled with his righteousness, his grace, and glory ! and to show forth, before angels and men, that I trust in nothing ; glory in nothing ; rejoice in nothing ; but in the cross of Christ, and God reconciled in him ! Stay me with flagons of Heaven’s new wine : comfort me with apples of blessings, growing on the tree of life ; for I am sick of love.—O for the broad seal of heaven, to every promise of the new covenant, to me this day.

“ The sacred bread is broken ; the wine is poured out.” What meaneth this service ? It is, that God, in my nature, was broken and bruised for me ; his blood squeezed forth, his soul poured out unto death, by the weight of mine iniquities imputed to him, and the load of his Father’s wrath due to me, executed upon him. Consider, my soul, the apostle and high priest of thy profession. Behold the great God, glorious in holiness, born of a sinful virgin ! born in the likeness of sinful flesh ! born under sin ! cast out from the womb into a stable ! laid in a manger, to the loathing of his person ! Behold the Lord of all, early persecuted ! as a fugitive and vagabond, driven from the promised land ! forced to hide himself in the land of graven images ! Behold the High

and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity ; who dwells in the high and holy place,—in light to which no man can approach, obscurely sojourning in Nazareth, whence nothing good was expected ! Behold the King of kings, debased to be a servant of servants,—to sinful men ! the Heir of all things laboriously earning his bread with the sweat of his brow ! Behold him whose name alone is JEHOVAH, the “ most high over all the earth,” reproached as a glutton, a drunkard, a deceiver, possessed of, and in compact with Satan ! Behold him whom archangels, with the profoundest adoration, confess and adore, “ betrayed into the hands of sinners ! sold for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave !—forsaken of all his disciples !—by one denied with curses and oaths !—reviled, buffeted, spitted upon, crowned with thorns ! condemned, and crucified between thieves !—On these let my faith, not my fancy, work ; and my spiritual knowledge, not my imagination, be strong.—Let me enter within the vail to contemplate what his soul suffered, when “ amazed and very heavy ; sorrowful even unto death ; troubled till he cried, What shall I say ? “ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? and why art thou so far from the words of my roaring ? ” troubled till, being in agony he, did sweat great drops of blood ! O what ten fold torments ! what overwhelming billows ! what boundless depths of divine wrath !—Astonishing thought ! the mighty God, in our nature, troubled in soul, till he knew not what to say ! sighing, sweating, roaring, groaning, dying under the weight of his Father’s fury,—due to men ! Still more endearing,—due to me !

“ The elements, the external symbols of the cru-

“cified Saviour, are delivered into my hands,” sweetened with his gracious words, “Take, eat : this is my body given for you ; broken for you : this do in remembrance of me. This Cup is the New Testament in my blood, shed for remission of sins unto many : drink ye all of it. Do this in remembrance of me.” O God-like ! love-like language ! sweeter than honey to my taste ! how powerfully it penetrates, melts, and ravisheth every corner of my heart ! Infinitely stupendous ! Hath JEHOVAH a body ? was his body broken ? his blood shed ? was all for me ! Can I, for overwhelming joy, believe ! yet, “ Lord, I believe ! help thou mine unbelief,” And in the faith hereof, I take you, angels and men, and chiefly thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to witness that I receive this bread and wine, as means instituted by JEHOVAH to feed my soul up to eternal life, as pledges of his giving, and of my accepting Jesus’ person, righteousness, and fulness, as MY ALL IN ALL : that I accept of his person as my Husband, to dwell with me ; as my Redeemer to bring me from the loathsome prison, and rescue me from the galling yoke ; as my Mediator, to procure endless peace between God and my soul ; as my Prophet, to show me the Father, and teach me his will ; my Priest, to atone for my guilt, and intercede for my blessedness ; my King, to subdue my heart, direct my path, keep me in safety, and destroy my foes ; and my Master and Lord, to be confessed and served in face of danger, and defiance of death ; my Friend, to support and comfort me in every adversity, and into whose bosom I may commit all my secret concerns ; my Shepherd, to seek me out, to recover

me when strayed, to keep me from want, to restore my soul, to cause me lie down in green pastures, to feed me, and for ever lead me unto fountains of living waters. His righteousness I accept as the sole price of my happiness, the foundation of my pardon and peace, the matter of my boasting, and my everlasting garment of salvation. His power and grace I accept as the source of my holy obedience, performing all things in and for me : his Spirit as my strengthener, comforter, and guide : his promise, as the charter of my happiness, and the channel of my gracious supply from his fulness ; his law, as my rule ; his cross, as my ornament and crown. Jesus Christ, and all that is his, are mine : and I, and all that I have, are his, from henceforth and for ever. Let this be written in my record on high, and for ever graven as with a pen of iron in the rock of my heart.

While I use this sacred provision, hearing of men, is not my proper work ; the business is between Jesus Christ and my soul. Let me ponder his delightful words, " Take, eat ; this is my body broken for you. This cup is the New Testament in my blood, shed for remission of sins unto many." Let me roll them as a sweet morsel, as honey and milk, under my tongue ; let my meditation thereon be sweet.— Was Jesus' body broken, and his blood shed for me ! for me, vanity ! for me, lighter than vanity ! for me, a worm wallowing amidst stench and corruption ! for me, a stupid outrageous beast before him ! for me, an useless wretch ; a polluted sinner ; a perverse child of disobedience ! for me, who, times without number, refused the Redeemer, trampled his blood under foot, and made the God of truth a liar : My

whole heart is moved, is melted and ravished, at the entrance of this word.—What is this !—Was JEROME's body broken, and his blood shed for such a dog, such a child of the devil, an enemy of all righteousness, as I am ? Was ever work ; ever love like this ! Why was it done ? He loved me, and gave himself for me. He loved ME, so mean ! so poor ! so deformed ! so froward ! so infamous ! so loathsome ! so abominable ! He loved ME, who hated, loathed, and abhorred, and murdered him ! Thrice-pleasant ! transporting wonder ! the Son of God loved me, and gave himself for ME ! What can I more say ! Is this the manner of men, O Lord ?

But for what end did he love ME, and give his body to be broken, and his blood to be shed for ME ! Was it that I should not perish, but have everlasting life ? that he might save my soul from the pit of corruption ? that he might enter into the stable of my heart ; and make it an habitation of God through the Spirit ? Was it that he might deliver and preserve ME from idols ; and from the grievous servitude of corruption ? that he might recal ME, a guilty fugitive and a vagabond, from an endless, a wrathful exile from my God ? Was it, that he might make obscure and wretched ME, in whom no good dwells, a shining pillar in the temple of his God ; give ME a new name, better than of sons and daughters ; and bestow upon me everlasting fulness, riches, and rest ? Was not his body broken and his blood shed for ME, that divine justice might withhold her overwhelming floods of deserved vengeance from ME ? might deliver ME into the hands of unbounded mercy, to enliven, cherish, and bless ME ! to acquit, and,

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amidst unfallen angels, and ransomed men, crown me with endless glory, life, and righteousness? to overwhelm me with bliss, till I be for ever enraptured, amazed and nonplused, what to think or say of his GRACE?

But who are the guilty persecutors, betrayers, and murderers of him who so loved me, and gave himself for me?—Ah! my sins:—he bare our sins in his own body on the tree. Bloody cannibals! was it not enough for you to murder my soul; but have you murdered my God, my Saviour too! Oh! if mine head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for your bloody crimes!—Ah! the cursed deeds, the horrid acts, my sins have done! what murderous things they be! Rise, rise my heart, proclaim eternal war with every darling lust; raise revenge; slay the murderers: spare none: O earth, cover thou not their blood, let their cry have no place. Almighty God, unto whom vengeance belongeth, show thyself; heap ten-fold fury on their head: when thou makest inquisition for blood, remember them: the violence done to me, and my Saviour, be on this wicked heart; our blood be on the cursed inhabitants thereof: These foxes, these mother's children, I cannot take or slay; but, in thy dreadful name, I turn and curse them: do thou seize; do thou tear them in pieces, while there is none to deliver them. Cursed be every inclination of my soul, every act of my life that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and keepeth back his sword from their blood. Vile miscreants, let me serve you as you did my Saviour, my God. In his first infancy, did you inhospitably ex-

clude him from the inn ? Be gone for ever from my heart ; let your place there be no more found. Did you early seek his life ? Through his grace, I vow to take your first motions, your tender little ones, and dash them to pieces against his cross. Did you banish him from the holy land ? Over his shed blood I swear to pursue you through every corner of my heart, my life, or my influence on earth, that you may find no rest. Huddled you him up in base, in abandoned Nazareth, and made him earn his bread with sore travail ? Despicable dung shall I account you, and every thing tainted with you, “ that I may win Christ, and be found in him ; ” and uneasy and struggling shall be your life in my heart, my house. Covered ye his blessed name with the vilest reproach ? To believe, to spread your execrable fame, to load you with your just, but odious character, shall be the business of my life. Allowed you him no where to lay his head ? Eagerly shall I strive, earnestly shall I pray, that you may find no room for me, or about me ; no room in the church, or in the earth ; that “ the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ : and the whole earth be filled with his glory. ” Stirred ye up multitudes against him ? Let me stir up ALL against the kingdom of sin. Ye powers of my soul, crucify the flesh, with her affections and lusts ; resist unto blood striving against sin : Ye sons of men, hate evil ; hate every false and wicked way ; abhor it ; abstain from every approach to it, and appearance of it : Awake, O Lord, to the judgment which thou hast commanded ; subdue our iniquities, and cast our sins into the depths of the sea. Abomination infernal,

did you excite one disciple to betray, another to deny, and the rest to forsake him and flee? Now do I, ah! too long your unhappy disciple, covenant to give you up, to give the most beloved of you up, into the hand of Jesus, my great Elder and High Priest, who seeketh your life; and was manifested to destroy the works of the devil: In his strength I vow to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts; and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; to flee youthful lusts; to forsake the evil, and choose the good. Did you instigate his foes to spit on, set at nought, scourge, condemn, and crucify him?—Through his grace, I purpose to oppose, to abominate, and condemn you; and, by a constant application of his death, for sanctifying me, and for weakening and killing you, to nail you to his cross. —Feeble resolves! Of myself, I can do nothing but sin:—It is thine, Lord, and on thee I depend to work all my work in me: and perform all things for me.

But why is this cup called the New Testament in his blood? Is it not because the whole covenant of grace, with all her blessings, as purchased by his blood; and all her promises, as ratified in it, is therewith divinely made over to me, and solemnly confirmed to me, by my reception and drinking thereof? O how highly favoured of the Lord am I? the “everlasting covenant is made with me; and this is all my salvation and all my desire.” What clusters of transcendent blessings, and of exceeding great and precious promises, are here! If I am guilty; the immutable God hath engaged to blot out my transgression as a thick cloud: if defiled; to sprinkle

clean water on me, and cleanse me from all my filthiness : if hard hearted ; to take away my heart of stone, and give me an heart of flesh : if carnal, and earthly-minded ; to put his Spirit within me : if perverse and plagued ; to see my ways and heal them : if grieved ; to “ restore comforts to me, and my mourners : ” (if deserted ; to see me again :) if tempted ; to make his grace sufficient for me ; if bent to backsliding ; to bring me again from Bashan-hill, and the seas devouring deeps ; to heal my backsliding and love me freely : never to turn away from me to do me good ; and to put his fear in my heart, that I may not turn away from him : if I am in doubt with respect to my duty ; he hath engaged to teach me, a sinner in his way : if my faith fails ; he hath promised, that in Jesus’ name shall the Gentiles trust : if I am under the prevalence of obdurate impenitency ; he hath bound himself, that I shall look on him whom I have pierced, and mourn : if my love chills ; he is deep sworn to “ circumcise my heart to love the Lord : if I am given to Atheism ; he testifieth against me, that he is God, even my God : if I am in trouble, and like to be terrified with mine adversities, and enemies ; he saith, “ I will be with him in trouble : When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee : fear not, I am with thee ; be not dismayed, I am thy God : ” — if, in soul or body, I am poor and needy, — am pre-saging sad wants ; he assures me, that “ bread shall be given me, and my water be sure ; that my God will supply all my need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus : ” if I am concerned for the spiritual welfare of my posterity ; he engageth to

pour out his Spirit on my seed, and his blessing on mine offspring. Do I tremble for the case of Zion? he hath engaged to build her up; to make her as though she had not been cast off; to enlarge her place; to give her pastors according to his own heart, to feed his people with knowledge and understanding; to be as the dew to Israel, make him revive as the corn, grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. Am I wearied of an evil world? he hath pledged his truth, that I shall go up to the mount Zion above, with everlasting joy on mine head; enter into the palace of the King; be made a pillar in the temple of my God, and go no more out. Engraven as in leaves of brass, deep marked with Jesus' blood, these mighty promises shine: they continue, like mount Zion, which shall never be removed. Mountains may depart, and hills be removed; but God's loving-kindness will he not take from me, nor suffer the sworn, the blood-ratified covenant of his peace to be broken. Here, in some humble place, let my name for ever stand, below the WORTHY LAMB. O for a strong, a lasting faith, to credit the Almighty's word: to embrace the promise of his Christ; and call the joys of heaven my own!

“ But why do I partake of these symbols? It is to “ show forth the Lord's death till he come.” It is in remembrance of Jesus, as my finished sacrifice, and my absent friend, who returns-quickly to receive me to himself; that where he is, I may be with him to behold his glory; and be like him, by seeing him as he is. Lord, who would not remember THEE, by the suffering of torment and death? how much more,

by eating the bread of life, and drinking the cup of salvation? Let my right hand forget her cunning, if I forget thee; if I forget to love, to serve, and to long for thee; if I prefer any advantage on earth, to thy service; if the enjoyment of thee be not the chief, the sole quintessence of that heavenly happiness which I wish or expect. O when shall I be feasted with all the fulness of God? when shall faint, twilight, momentary, views of thy countenance, give place to, bright, meridian, endless vision! "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. I desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better." But suppose my days on earth be prolonged, I hope to carry about with me the relish, the impression of this divine visit, till I die. Never, I hope, shall corruptions, doubts, or darkness, prevail against me, as heretofore. "My mountain stands strong; I shall never be moved."—

"My sweet ravishment is already gone: Jesus hideth his face, and I am troubled." Let me trust in the name, in the promise of the Lord, which doth not ebb and flow with my frames.—Carnal heart, where art thou now?—Not one thought upon divine things can I command: Ah! my cursed pride, and dependance on my frame, on my wisdom and strength, have brought me to this! After such clear and delightful views of my God, my Saviour, must I leave this table as a stupid, a carnal, careless beast?—What if all was a mere delusion!—Few moments ago, I hoped to rise full of the Holy Ghost, and in the firm assurance of a speedy interview with Christ, in his Father's kingdom: but now, were it not, that

I cannot, I dare not, give up my claim to that promise, which I thought the Rock of Israel spoke to me at * * * *, I behoved to conclude the manner of my present removal from this table, an awful pre-sage of Jesus' shortly driving me from his judgment-seat, with a tremendous "I know you not; depart from me, you worker of iniquity." "Now, being come from the table, had I any secret place, I would retire a little, and pour out my complaints unto God." Sometimes, deeply impressed with a Redeemer's dying command, have I, through floods of fear, of lust, of temptation, and of divine hidings, struggled forward to his sacred feast, and have come away rejoicing in God through him. Sometimes I have gone up, continued at, and come away like a serpent, which feedeth on dust and ashes. But never, immediately after so ravishing a frame, was my soul altogether swallowed up of corruption.

"Now I look on, while others partake." When I think what a miracle of redeeming love it is, to see these sinful men feasting with God upon the flesh and blood of his only begotten Son: when I hear Jesus repeat these affecting words, "Take, eat; this is my body broken for you: this is my blood of the New-Testament, which is shed for many: which is shed for you:"—when I hear his sufferings exhibited, his promises declared, agreeable to the various and unnumbered cases of his children, my heart begins to glow; Lord, kindle it into a vehement flame.—Now is come salvation and strength: the Lord gives me a sealed pardon of all my sins, a clear view of my king in his beauty, and of the heavenly land afar off: now he saith to my soul, "Come, let

us reason together : though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow ; and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Thou shalt be as though thou hadst not been cast off." Lord, should death now seize me in thine arms, scarce would his terror make me afraid ; scarcely could I feel his cold embrace. While I believe, while I see thy love in dying for me, how earnestly I covet death, that I may be with thee, may perfectly resemble my Father who is in heaven !—I was not formed for earth and sin ; nor can I live on things so vile : how I tremble to think of relapsing into my lusts ! how the view of thy death hath made the world dead to me ; and me to it ! May I rather die a thousand deaths than lack thy presence. Since here I cannot enjoy thee to my wish ; let me die, that I may know thee, even as I am known. How my breast burns with a view of that Eternity whose beginnings I feel in my soul ! O when shall death put on my clay-pale silks for marriage robes, in which, rather from which, I shall go to God mine exceeding joy. What dreadful assaults from Satan hath my soul sustained ! but now, as if he had lost all his darts, I feel nothing but inexpressible tranquillity and peace with God, through my Lord Jesus Christ.

" The communicants come and go from the table, " with the high praises of God in their mouth."—When I meet with Jesus on earth, how it tunes my heart to praise him ! When I retire from this world to the celestial banquet, what high songs shall be in my lips ! what everlasting joy on my head ! When we, ransomed millions, retire from the judgment seat, to the palace of the King, how all along the passage,

shall we shout the REDEEMER ! For ever with what melody shall we cry, " Salvation to our God that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb." " How hath " the discourse at this table warmed my heart ! how " pertinently hath my case been spoken to ! what " encouraging promises have I heard !" Now I see, and am persuaded, that nothing can separate me from the love of Christ, or turn away his mercy from me : now can I with pleasure, kiss crosses, or comforts, smiling goodness, or afflicting justice : I can do all things through Christ strengthening me ; I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content :—Only SIN I will not, I cannot endure.—When I can read my title clear to mansions in the heavens, I bid my griefs and fears depart ; I wipe my weeping eyes. " The table is drawn." But blessed JEHOVAH, the gospel-table is not drawn, the fulness of God is not exhausted ; the feast in glory shall never be finished.—O to drink of the new wine with Christ in his Father's kingdom ! O to receive my next communion in the immediate presence of God ! Ordinances of the Most High ; precious means of my fellowship with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; how gladly would I exchange you for God himself as my ALL IN ALL ! Cisterns, how willingly would I part with you, for the infinite fountain of living waters ! House of God, in which a day hath often been better than a thousand ; how cheerfully would my soul exchange thee for the house eternal in the heavens ! To it swift be my passage, short my road ; may I but shut my eyes, and see my God.

" Now prayer is to begin ; what a roll of distressed persons are here recommended to our sym-

“pathy?” My soul, I charge thee, now and afterward, to carry their case before God; weep with them that weep; in all their affliction be thou afflicted, as if it were thyself, being yet in the body. —Let me, with the congregation, thank the Lord for what of his goodness he caused to pass before us. Let us bewail our unworthy carriage in his presence. Let us beg that he may fix on our heart what we have heard, seen, felt and tasted of the word of life. Let us strive together in our prayers for Zion, till her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth. Let us now sing psalms with grace. “My heart is fixed, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise.”—Sweet lines! —the joy, the delight of my soul! let no officious impertinent thought intrude on my mind, while I join to sing them.

“Now the pastor proceeds to bless us in the name of the Lord.” Why this hustle among the people to get out before, or during the pronouncement of this solemn blessing? Are these hurrying professors in compact with Satan? Have they sworn to him, that they will never willingly hear it? Are they tired out with the delightful work of the day? Have they no manners toward their Maker, that they will not wait a decent farewell? Or, reckon they his blessing unworthy of a moment’s patience? I wish this scandalous flying off, be not the prelude of their dismissal from Jesus’ bar, loaded with a grievous, an eternal curse! Lord, how heartily my soul says amen to this sweet benediction! By this grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, this love of the Father, and communion

of the Holy Ghost, do men live ; and herein is the life of my soul.

“ My friends and I go to a refreshment.” May none of us, by improper conversation, deaden and defile, but quicken and edify one another in love ; as iron sharpeneth iron, may each of us “ provoke one another unto love and good works.” “ Perhaps “ some, better than we, have nothing to refresh themselves with.” However, abstinence is often the best of medicines. O how much good God hath done to me by denying me what I desire ! Is there any thing, next to Jesus and his grace, that I am more beholden to, than to wants and trouble.—Thrice blessed wants, which lead to a full, a liberal Saviour ! Pray, sirs, “ while we refresh our body with Jesus’ “ external bounty,” let us refresh our inner-man with a review of our business to-day ; let us talk of the excellent things which he hath done for and to us : let us compare notes ; and why not hearts and frames ? —How went the matter with your soul to-day ? “ Saw ye him whom my soul loveth ? Did “ he put in his hand by the hole of the door ;” move your bowels, and refresh your heart ? Did he bring you into his banqueting-house ; and direct the banner of love over you ? Was the King held in the galleries of ordinances ? Did he sit at his table, and cause your spikenard to send forth the smell thereof ? Did somebody here touch him, till virtue proceeded from him to heal every plague ? According to this solemn occasion may it be said, “ what hath the Lord done ? what hath the Lord wrought ?”

“ Now we go to evening exercise.” May God

come down, and do things which we look not for : let the mountains flow down at his presence. Jesus, my King, come down ; according to all that thy soul desireth, come down, and my part shall be to deliver my lusts into thy hand, for the destruction thereof. —The more of Christ I enjoy, the more my desire after him is enlarged : my heart, like the daughters of the horse-leech, still crieth GIVE, GIVE. O to be in heaven, where I shall have more than heart can wish of him, and his fulness, and get my whole soul poured forth in everlasting raptures and flames of love to him ! I may call the name of this discourse, “ The Lord is there.” “ Have I also here looked after “ him who liveth and seeth me ? ” But, shocking thought, how quickly shall this multitude be dismissed from Jesus’ bar, perhaps mostly, in the very same state as now !

“ To-day have I been entertained with the preaching of the gospel of Christ ? ” Yes : the preachers were regularly called to their office ; and plainly show themselves, not the servants of men, but of Jesus Christ, for our sake ; preachers not of themselves, but of Christ Jesus the Lord.—No trifling or angry disputes hath larded their discourse.—The sum of all that I have heard is, “ that as sin reigned unto death, so grace,” the free favour of God, “ reigns through imputed righteousness unto eternal life,” begun in grace and perfected in glory, “ by Jesus Christ our Lord.” How clearly hath the difference of the law, which requires all obedience from me ; and of the gospel strictly taken, which freely offers, brings near, presents, and gives, all privileges to me ; and their blessed harmony, and mutual sub-

serviency in Christ, been stated and illustrated.—How have the rigid precepts, and the tremendous curses of the broken law, and my own guilt, corruption, and weakness, been thundered into my ears? Not that I should attempt to keep the law, for recommending me to the favour of God; but that, as a distinguished, and unparalleled sinner, I, pricked to the heart, might flee from it to Jesus, as the “end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth;” and, safe under his shadow, his sprinkling of blood, might admire what he undertook! what he fulfilled for me.—Hath not my soul been charmed with the glad tidings of great joy, which are to all people, that to us SINNERS was born; to us AS SINNERS, is divinely given a SAVIOUR, which is Christ the Lord!—That HE, in whom dwells all the fulness of God; HE, in whom all the promises are YEA and AMEN, hath fulfilled all righteousness, and received all gifts for men, yea for the rebellious, that God the Lord might dwell among them?—That unto men, brutish, guilty, polluted, lost, and enslaved, HE is given in the gospel offer, is “made of God wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption?”—That, in the most gracious and free promises, in the most unnumbered invitations, HE lifteth up his heart-melting voice, and stretcheth out his arms of mercy, to save sinners, even the chief?—O “faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance!”—How warmly have I been exhorted, that being united to Jesus, as the Lord my righteousness, redeemed by his blood out of the hand of my spiritual enemies, blessed with the free remission of my sins, acceptance into the favour of God, and full and irrevocable claim to endless fe-

licity, according to the riches of his righteousness and grace;—united to HIM as my quickening and strengthening head, I should serve in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of my life; denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and walking soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world!—being perfect, even as my father which is in heaven is perfect! How sweetly hath the perfecting of holiness in the fear of the Lord been set before me, as my GREAT PRIVILEGE, purchased with a Saviour's blood; given in his promise; secured by the imputation of his all-cleansing righteousness; and effected by his Spirit!—as my honourable and comprehensive DUTY, which I am commanded by his law! constrained toward by his love; directed to by his pattern; and assisted in by his grace!—as my useful BUSINESS, whereby I at once honour my God; truly profit my neighbour; and bring into myself a present, an everlasting, but gracious reward.—By divine truth, in this order, do men live; and therein is the life of my soul.

It is the proper connecting of the heavenly oracles, that makes a sermon relish as true gospel with me. Ah! how many sermons are a mere chaos of confusion, nay, an antichristian overturning of the gospel of God; not so much because they are larded with error, as that divine truths are not therein exhibited in their true connection with JEHOVAH's redeeming grace, and with Jesus' person, and imputed righteousness, as their centre! How absurdly doth the preacher descant concerning the divine perfections, if he show me not God "as in Christ, well pleased," not with my legal service, but "for his righteousness sake:"

and so "reconciling the world to himself," in giving to them his Son, and in giving them himself, as their "God, merciful and gracious, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin."—Without **THIS**, every splendid harangue of uncreated excellencies, can only be considered by me, as a celebration of that which I cannot obtain; nay, of my greatest foe; and so cannot fail to work wrath in my heart against him.—How cruel mockery, to entertain me, a **SINNER**, with descants of the heavenly glory, if it be not represented as a better country, to which Jesus, the Saviour from sin, is the sole, the new, the living, the free, the patent way;—as a possession, purchased with his blood, and given in his gracious promise;—and as a felicity, consisting in the endless beholding of **HIS** glory, and the enjoying of God in **HIM**?—To discourse to me, a rich deservant of wrath, concerning the tremendous nature, the justness, and the perpetual duration of hell-fire, without reminding me, how Jesus the Redeemer "bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows, was made a curse for us," that he might save us from the wrath to come, and obtain eternal redemption for us,—it is but to act the fiend, and to torment me before the time.

To acquaint me with the multitude, the filth, the absurdity, of my vices, and my lusts; and with the charms, the profit, the pleasure, the honour, the duty of virtue; and to call me off, from the one to the other, how heathenish, if he set not before me Jesus "as sent to save men from sin," to sanctify the people with his own blood; Jesus as having "finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness," through which imputed,

we became dead to, and are delivered from, the broken law of works, which is the strength of sin; have our inward enmity slain by his bleeding love, and Almighty Spirit; that being married to, and created a new in Christ Jesus, "and having him dwelling in our heart, we, in his strength, may bring forth "fruit unto God, and walk in newness of life?"

How warmly may the preacher harangue concerning the new birth, its nature, its necessity, and excellency; concerning the indwelling of the divine Spirit in our soul; concerning mortification of sin, repentance towards God, and fellowship with him, without preaching the gospel of Christ? how often doth the blasphemous Quaker so entertain his, or her, audience?—If these are not represented as the purchase of Jesus' obedience; as the absolutely free and promised gift of God to us; as the fruit of union to Jesus; as the Lord our righteousness and strength; where is the gospel, the glad tidings to me who am "dead in trespasses and sins?" Without this quickening prophecy, how can my dead bones live? Without this hearing of faith, how can I receive the Holy Ghost? Untouched by redeeming love, how can I, who am by nature enmity against God, forsake or crucify my lusts, or turn to him, as my master and joy? how can I walk with him, except through the blood of his Son, we be agreed, and have him for our war!

To no more purpose, harangues he to me, concerning Jesus' sufferings and merit, and my duty to believe on him; if he show me not, how this Jesus was divinely "made under the law—made sin for us;" had our sins charged and punished on

him ;—"died for the ungodly !—suffered the just for the unjust, that he might bring us sinners to God, and make us the righteousness of God," perfectly righteous before God as a Judge, IN HIM :—if he do not exhibit the record of God, that in his crucified Son, there is eternal life for sinners, even the chief ; and that he, as my Almighty, my only Saviour, my gracious husband, my everlasting righteousness, unfailing strength, and satisfying portion, is, in the evangelic promise and oath of God, given to me, as one "stout-hearted, and far from righteousness." Without such representation, such exhibition of Christ, amidst ten thousand descants of a Saviour, and of faith in him, I am but told, that he merited life for me, if I, who cannot cease from sin, do, by my own good works, and sincere intentions, recommend myself to his favour ; or, that he merited, that I might merit for myself.—What is this more than a Jesuit doth teach ?—Without such exhibition of Christ, the faith to which I am exhorted is but an airy fancy, without a foundation ; a wandering into a wilderness, in which there is no way ; a presumptuous robbery of God, pretending to take hold of his Son, without eyeing his GIVING PROMISE as my warrant.

Detested too be the preacher, who warmly descants concerning Jesus' imputed righteousness, and his Father's free gift of him for men, as their surety and ransom, and to them, as their husband and portion ; but neglects to point him forth as a Saviour from the power and pollution of sin—manifested to destroy the works of the devil in my heart and

life, and fill their place with implanted habits of grace in my heart, and exercises of true holiness in my life ;—a Redeemer “ from all iniquity, who comes to turn away ungodliness from Jacob ;” a purchaser of “ a peculiar people, zealous of good works :”—shows me not, how Jesus’ redeeming love constrains to hate every false way ; how his justifying sentence ascertains and promotes spiritual life of conformity to God ; how his dwelling in my heart by faith, infallibly determineth to, and powerfully effectuateth “ holiness in all manner of conversation.”—Detested be the preacher, who represents not sin as the greatest misery, as well as the only crime of rational creatures ; and HOLINESS as the very quintessence of true and endless felicity : who represents not my HOLINESS in nature and in life, as the glorious end of all the gracious purposes, precious promises, holy laws, kind providences, free and inestimable gifts of God.

“ Now we go home from public worship : but what “ crowds yonder recreate themselves !” Is there no fear of God in this place ? Is there no minister or magistrate, who may check this shameful and wicked practice ! Should God sit judge upon the inhabitants of this corner, as on the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath, how few would escape public stoning ! But though he bear long, he will revenge them speedily : their judgment lingereth not ; their damnation slumbereth not. Ah ! cursed recreation, that ends in eternal torment ! Do not the people of this country know that they have immortal souls, that they cannot devise, how to spend a seventh day in concern about their spiritual and eternal happiness ! “ What

“ numbers of children play on the street !” Ah ! are their parents desirous to witness these, now sportive babes, doomed to everlasting destruction ; and to hear them eternally curse them, for not warning them of their sin and danger, and restraining them from it ?

“ By the shutting of their doors and windows, “ what numbers seem already in bed !” Poor souls, hath a part of a Sabbath wearied them out ? how then could they endure an eternity in heaven ? What killing work to them would be the unceasing praises of God and the Lamb ? But it is hell for which they seem ripening :—how well they relish “ everlastings burnings, where they shall have no rest day nor night ;” where, for every sleep procured by robbing God, so much torment and sorrow shall be given them !

“ Yonder professors come, I suppose, from a tea-visit.” Alas ! when will they grow wise : Is not this contrary to God’s command, to do their own ways, and find their own pleasure ? Is it not to expose themselves to carnal converse ? to divert their friends from the proper business of the day ? Doth not their example tempt the openly wicked to crowd together on it, for their carnal chat, their unnecessary drinking, or civil employ ? and is it not affecting that so few professors, on other days, have their private meetings for prayer and spiritual converse ?—Would not such a course tend to the revival of religion ? to rekindling of Christian love ! Would it not promote mutual watchfulness, and brotherly reproof ; and so prevent manifold scandals ? Would it not increase religious knowledge ; improve the practice of

prayer ; and tend to bring blessings on the land ? for the joint. “ effectual fervent prayer of righteous men availeth much.”

“ Goeth yonder * * * * minister, with his loose companion, to the tavern ; or goeth he to his friend * * * *’s house, to enjoy his cups ? perhaps to play “ at his darling cards.” O the surprising patience of God, which suffers such criminals to live ! Contrary to their vows, their credit, their character, how many leaders of this people cause them to err ; and they that are led of them are destroyed ? Is it not sufficient that too many unfaithful pastors of this age, should, on the Sabbath, chat concerning carnal business, as farmers do in a market ? but must they also thereon eat and drink with the drunken ? How can I safely acknowledge any such as ambassadors of Jesus Christ ? Need I wonder that their hearers should boldly curse and swear in their presence ? should, by idle walking, profane the Sabbath in their view ?—should avowedly neglect the private and secret worship of their Maker ? Alas ! how many ministers are at pains, in their practice, to teach their people, that Christianity is all a farce and themselves mere dissemblers in the pulpit !

“ When the conversation among those with whom I walk turned upon trifling circumstances, “ as, whom they saw to-day ; who preached ; how “ proper his method ; how easy and flowing his language ; how finely turned his periods ; and the “ like ; they spoke with great readiness and pleasure, “ enamoured with the subject : but being checked “ for such prostitution of sacred time, and a spiritual

“ topic of converse introduced, they are mostly struck “ speechless, as if a dumb spirit had entered into “ them.”—Is it not truly shocking for professed Christians, just after so solemn work, to plunge themselves into the curse of Korah and his company ? to give themselves to be swallowed up alive in the earth ? Can any thing tend more effectually to carry out of their head and heart, every impression of that which they have been about !—How often hath my conscience upbraided me for this criminal conduct ? How often have I bewailed my guilt before God, and yet, on the first temptation, relapsed into it ! Lord, “ for thy name’s sake pardon mine iniquity : for it is very great.”

“ Having got safely home, let each of us first go “ alone, and cry to God for a blessing on the ordi- “ nances of this day.” God forbid, that we should prefer our body to our soul. Carnal feasting, as well as carnal company, just after solemn work, hath no small tendency to rot the spiritual seed. “ We “ are now at supper.” Let there be a savour of Christ at our table, that it may not become a trap to us. Let us talk of the supper of the Lord, wherewith we have been feasted to-day ; and of the supper of the Lamb, wherewith we hope to be feasted for ever.— “ How unruly, and full of idle chat, are these chil- “ dren ! worse on Sabbath than on other occasions.” Ah ! how like our hearts ! Did not common prudence, pride, fear of men, awe of a natural conscience, and the like, restrain many, would they not give as sad discoveries of the carnality and folly of their hearts, as these babes do ? “ We have got family worship ;

“but this man who, in prayer, hath been our mouth
“to God, hath sadly prostituted an ordinance, by
“the tiresome length of it ; and by intermingling
“doubtful disputes, and instructive hints, as if he in-
“tended to teach the Almighty knowledge.” Never
on such occasions do I relish long prayers in company
with others : and never more, than when they are
used by those, who, to their shame, are often exceed-
ing curt and hurried, or, contrary to reason, noisy
and loud, in their secret devotion.

“Let me now retire by myself, and seriously re-
“view the favours of God, and my carriage towards
“him to-day.—Let me solemnly confess my sins ;
“offer thanksgiving for my mercies ; and beg the
“supply of my wants.” May this night witness a
Peniel communion betwixt God and my soul. May
her silent watches attest the unutterable groans of
my heart, and the songs of my praise unto the God
of my life. Let not me “give sleep to mine eyes,
or slumber to my eye-lids, till I find a place for the
Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob,”
in my heart, my family, my country, and the whole
earth. Let me pray over the work of the day ; and
solemnly devote myself, my friends, and neighbours,
to him “who loved me, and gave himself for me.”
Let me earnestly plead his various promises, as they
respect our diversified case. Let me apprehend him,
hold him, and refuse to let him go, till I bring him to
my mother’s house, to the chambers, the assemblies
and ordinances of the church that conceived me.—
“Scarcely begun to pray, my heart hath forsaken
“me.” Was ever heart so deceitful, so carnal, so

wicked ! Was ever such a changeling in religious exercises as I ? Ah ! I am almost in the midst of all evil ! Lusts prevail ; Satan assails me with redoubled fury, buffets me with his fiery darts ; he suggests the most atheistical blasphemies, and abominable thoughts ; he tempts me to the vilest enormities. My flesh shudders to think of my case ! What shall I do ?—Pray I cannot : forbear I dare not.—Dare not, my soul, to finish a day, and especially a Sabbath, without some special fellowship with God.—“ Where, Lord, is the sounding of thy bowels, and thy tender mercies toward me ? are they restrained ? ” I cannot, I dare not, let thee alone, till thou deliver me. I dare not sleep with a heart in this case. Rather will I wrestle till the day break, than leave the duty without finding thee. Alas ! wrestle I cannot ; but will sigh and groan, till thou return and rescue me from my spiritual enemies.—Compassionate Samaritan, hasten thine aid to a poor soul, fallen among thieves indeed ; a soul that lieth bleeding at thine altar,—lieth a murdering by Satan and his own lusts ! Canst thou suffer such indignity to be done to thy darling ordinance of prayer ?—to be done to a poor brother, but newly devoted to thy service ? Can thy pity forbear flying to the relief of thine own, of thy destitute kinsman ?

“ Now I have found him whom my soul loveth.” Thrice-precious truth, that he never said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain. Come, my beloved, let us go into the field ; let us lodge in the villages ; there will I give thee my loves. Come, let us take our fill of divine love until the morning : let us so-

lace ourselves with redeeming love—What blessed moments these,—while I lie, all inflamed, all heart-melted, with a Saviour's bleeding love; and am overwhelmed with the delights, the raptures of heaven! —O how my heart is transported, is ravished with the view of what my adored Jesus hath done for me, in the purchase of my redemption; and doth to me, in the everlasting application of it to my soul! **THERE**, **JEHOVAH** found him out, and laid my help on him that is mighty: **HERE**, he is found of me that sought him not. **THERE**, he struck my name from the debt-bond, the broken covenant; sure charter to infinite woe! and inserted his own: **HERE**, he causeth me to enter into the bond of his new covenant; makes with me an “everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David.” **THERE**, he served himself heir to my deserved threatenings of his Father's indignation: **HERE**, he bequeathes, he gives to me his exceeding great and precious promises of eternal life. **THERE**, to be more firmly connected with my guilt, my woe, he was made priest with an oath: **HERE**, that I might have strong consolation, he swears that he hath “no pleasure in the death of the wicked;” and that surely blessing he will bless me. **THERE**, he, who was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, emptied himself of his glory: **HERE**, he confers on me, an exceeding and eternal weight of glory;—the Lord is my everlasting light and my God my glory.

THERE, in the purchase of redemption, he was found in fashion as a man, a son of man: **HERE**, in the

application of it, he makes me a son, an heir of God, and joint heir with Christ. **THERE**, he was sent forth "in the likeness of sinful flesh:" **HERE**, he makes me a partaker of divine nature, and changeth me into the divine image from glory to glory. **THERE** he became "a worm, and no man:" **HERE**, he renders me equal to the angels of God in heaven.—**THERE**, he, the Son of his Father's love, was an out-cast, an exile: **HERE**, I, a hateful, distant foe, am, through his blood, brought near to God, even to his seat. **THERE**, he "bore our infirmities," was weary and weak handed: **HERE**, he hath a fellow-feeling of our infirmities, is afflicted in all our affliction, and perfects his strength in my weakness. **THERE**, he "made himself of no reputation," was a reproach of men, and despised of the people: **HERE**, he gives me a new name, which the mouth of the Lord doth name; "the ransom of the Lord; the holy one sought out; and not forsaken." **THERE**, he took on him the yoke of the broken law; the yoke of my transgressions was wreathed about his neck: **HERE**, he brings me into the glorious liberty of the sons of God; puts on me his yoke, which is easy; and his burden which is light. **THERE**, he "bare the sins of many; was made sin for us:" **HERE**, he makes me righteous, the "righteousness of God in him."—**THERE**, he was condemned, was made a curse for us: **HERE**, he is a Prince and Saviour, exalted to give repentance and remission of sins: sent to bless me, in turning me from mine iniquities; set up to be blessings for evermore. **THERE**, he was joined with thieves; was numbered with transgressors:—

HERE, he puts me "among the children;" joins me with "thrones and dominions:" nay, truly my "fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

THERE, in the purchase of redemption, he was oppressed with ignominious poverty; had not "where to lay his head:" **HERE**, in the application of it, "through his poverty, I became rich;" he gives me his unsearchable riches, the † goodly heritage of the hosts of nations; fills me with all the fulness of God; gives me the Most High for my habitation, my dwelling place in all generations. **THERE**, for hunger and thirst, his soul fainted in him: **HERE**, he satiates my soul with his goodness; gives me his flesh, which is meat indeed, and his blood, which is drink indeed; gives me bread of life, living water, an overflowing cup of salvation. **THERE**, he "hid not his face from shame and spitting: had his visage more marred than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: **HERE**, he makes me lift up my face without spot unto God: makes me shine as the sun in the kingdom of my Father. **THERE**, he was divinely deserted; his Father forsook him, and was far from the words of his roaring: **HERE**, he lifts on me the light of **JEHOVAH's** countenance, and shall make me like him, by seeing him as he is; for so shall I be for ever with the Lord. **THERE**, he gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; was wounded for our transgressions: **HERE**, he is the Lord my God that healeth me, that healeth all my diseases, and binds up my painful wounds: by his stripes I am healed. **THERE**,

on the cross he would not come down and save himself: **HERE**, on the throne, he comes down, to take me from the pit of corruption, draw me out of many waters, turn me from ungodliness, and save me from the lowest hell. **THERE**, he wore a crown of thorns: **HERE**, he gives me a crown of life, makes me a royal diadem in the hand of my God. **THERE**, he drank the baneful cup of infinite wrath: **HERE**, he gives me the fountain of life, rivers of pleasure; and makes me drink "water out of the wells of salvation." **THERE**, he was amazed, and very heavy, exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: **HERE**, he makes me obtain joy and gladness, go to God mine exceeding joy, and enter into the joy of my Lord. **THERE**, he poured out his soul unto death, travailed in pain till he knew not what to say: **HERE**, he is formed in my heart, the hope of glory, sees in me the travail of his soul, and is satisfied. **THERE**, he shed his blood for me: **HERE**, he loveth me, and washeth me from my sins in his blood; and makes me a king and priest unto God, even the Father. **THERE**, he died for the ungodly: **HERE**, he hath quickened me, who was dead in trespasses and sins; because he lives, I shall live also; my "life is hid with Christ in God," and when he appears, I "shall also appear with him in glory." **THERE**, he was buried, descended into the lower parts of the earth: **HERE**, raised up and alive for evermore, he raiseth me up together, and makes me sit together with him in heavenly places.—What melting views are these! how my heart heaves with joy! flames with love! would burst in praise, if wonder did allow! All lovely Jesus, who and what

art thou? my husband! my friend! my brother!
my boast! my bliss! my riches! my honour! my
health! my teacher! my king! my priest! my al-
tar! my sacrifice! my God! my ALL!—Lord, how
thy glory dazzleth mine eye! thy sweetness enrap-
tures my heart! how my soul is satisfied as with
marrow and with fatness! Thy LOVE is better than
life: therefore shall my lips praise thee. O when
shall I come, and appear before God?—O living God
for thee!—I beseech thee, show me thy glory. Make
haste, flee away, my Beloved, and be thou like to a
roe, or a young hart upon the heavenly mountains of
spices.

THE END.



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The object is a large, rectangular, light-colored piece of fabric or paper, possibly a piece of clothing or a piece of paper. It is centered in the frame and has a dark, irregular border. The background is dark and textured.





